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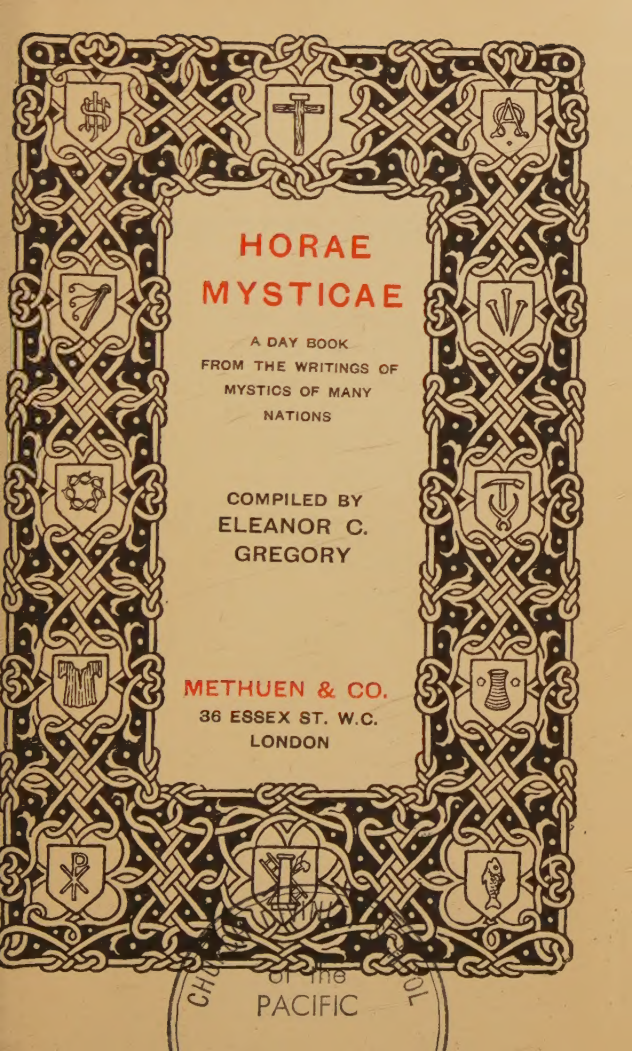
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HORAE MYSTICAE

A DAY BOOK
FROM THE WRITINGS OF
MYSTICS OF MANY
NATIONS

COMPILED BY
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E. C. G.

DEANERY, ST PAUL'S

HORAE MYSTICAE

First Sunday in Advent

PREPARE thyself well for a departure hence ; for truly thou sittest as a bird on the bough, and art as a man who stands on the water side, and looks at the swift sailing ship in which he will presently take his seat, and sail away for a strange land, whence he will never more return. Therefore, so regulate thy life, that when the ship comes for thee, thou mayst be ready, and mayst joyfully take thy departure hence.

Suso.

IN the parting moment the Things and Sounds of this world will be exactly alike : to have had an estate, or only to have heard of it will be the same Good or the same Nothing to thee.

William Law.

I WOULD be engaged in nothing but in the care of my own faculty of choice ; how to render it undisturbed, unrestrained, uncompelled, free. I would be found studying this, that I may be able to say to God : "Have I ever accused thee, or censured thy dispensations ? I have been sick, because it was thy pleasure ; and so have others, but I willingly. I have been poor, it being thy will, but with joy. Have I not always approached thee with a cheerful countenance, prepared to execute thy commands and the significations of thy will ?

Epictetus.

MONDAY

O THOU ! the first fruits of the dead,
And their dark bed,
When I am cast into that deep
And senseless sleep,
The wages of my sinne,
O then,
Thou great Preserver of all men,
Watch o're that loose
And empty house,
Which I sometimes liv'd in !
It is in truth a ruin'd peece ;
Not worth thy Eyes ;
And scarce a room, but wind and rain
Beat through and stain
The seats, and Cells within ;
Yet thou
Led by thy Love wouldst stoop thus low,
And in this Cott,
All filth and spott,
Didst with thy servant Inne.
And nothing can, I hourelly see,
Drive thee from me.
Thou art the same, faithfull and just,
In life or Dust.
Though then thus crumm'd I stray
In blasts,
Or Exhalations, and wasts
Beyond all Eyes
Yet thy love spies
That Change, and knows thy Clay.
Henry Vaughan.

TUESDAY

JUST as it is the lot of the reprobate to die in sin, so it is that of God's elect to die in His Love and Grace. The faithful never die suddenly, for death can never be unforeseen to him who has steadily pursued his Christian course to the end ; but he may die by a sudden death, and therefore we should ask not merely to be delivered from a sudden death, but from a sudden and unprepared death.

St Francis de Sales.

O HAPPY the man that ever he was born, who arrives well prepared at this hour, for his passage will be a good one, however bitter his death ; lo ! the bright angels will guard him, the saints escort him, the heavenly court receive him ; his last marching forth will be an entry into his everlasting Fatherland. But me, woe is me, where will my soul lodge this very night in the strange mysterious country ?

Suso.

THERE is nothing, but Man that respecteth Greatness : Not God ; not Death ; not Judgement.

Bishop Hall.

WEDNESDAY

WHEN I beheld the countless number of Death's arrows, it came into my mind : "Whence then does Death take that mass of arrows, that she never exhausts them?" And I look, and behold quite clearly that she had no arrows at all, but only a bow ; the arrows she took from the people, each one from that person whom she intended to strike. And I observed that these people themselves trimmed and prepared these arrows, some even pertly and audaciously carried them to her, so that it was sufficient for her to take the arrows from them and to shoot them in the heart. And I cried : "Now I see that it is true : *Et mortis faber est quilibet ipse suae*" I already see that no one dies who had not by his greediness, intemperance, frowardness, or indiscretion, brought on himself the wounds from the arrows of Death. — *Comenius.*

WE must now speak of Death, for the Death frightens the many as a very great evil through ignorance of the fact. For Death becomes dissolution of a defunct body ; and also the number of the harmonies of the body being completed. For the harmonization of the body is number. But the body dies when it can no longer support the man.

Hermes Trismegistus.

FRIDAY

WHITHER go the Souls, both of the Saved and Damned, when they leave these mortal Bodies?

The Soul needeth no going forth, only the outward mortal Life and the earthly Body do at Death separate themselves from the Soul. The Soul hath Heaven and Hell in itself before. And whether of the two States, viz : either Heaven or Hell, shall be manifested in the Soul, in *that* it standeth.

Doth it not enter into Heaven or Hell as a Man entereth into a House, or goeth through a Door, or Passage, into another Place? No, there is no such Kind of entering ; for Heaven and Hell are present everywhere, and it is but the turning of the Will either into God's Love, or into his Anger that introduceth into them. And that cometh to pass in this Life.

Jacob Behmen.

LORD, if our days be few, why do we Spend
And lavish them unto so evil an end ?

Lord if our days be evil, why do we wrong
Ourselves and Thee, to wish our Day so long ?

Our days decrease, but still our evils renew ;
Great God, we make them evil, Thou mak'st them
few.

Quarles.

SATURDAY

WHEN a man sleeps, all his wonted habits sleep with him, waking when he wakes ; and even so when the good man meets with death in a sudden form, be it accidental, or other, he may not die in the external practice of Divine Love, but he none the less dies in God's Love, as the Wise Man saith, 'Though the righteous be prevented with death, yet shall he be in rest,' for the means to eternal life is that death find a man living in habitual love and charity.

St Francis de Sales.

IS it thy pleasure that I should depart from this assembly ? I depart. I give thee all thanks that thou hast thought me worthy to have a share in it with thee ; to behold thy works, and to join with thee in comprehending thy administration.

Epictetus.

Second Sunday in Advent

O DAY of life, of light, of love !
 The onely day dealt from above !
 A day so fresh, so bright, so brave
 'Twill shew us each forgotten grave,
 And make the dead, like flowers arise
 Youthful and fair to see new skies.
 All other days, compar'd to thee,
 Are but light's weak minority ;
 They are but veils, and Cyphers drawn
 Like Clouds, before thy glorious dawn.
 O come ! arise ! shine ! do not stay.

Dearly lov'd day !

The fields are long since white, and I
 With earnest groans for freedom cry ;
 My fellow creatures too say, *Come !*
 And stones, though speechless, are not dumb.
 When shall we hear that glorious voice
 Of life and joys ?

That voice, which to each secret bed
 Of my Lord's dead,
 Shall bring true day, and make dust see
 The way to immortality ?

Dear Lord ! make haste !

Sin every day commits more waste ;
 And thy old enemy, which knows
 His time is short, more raging grows.

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

HOW shall the World be judged and by whom?

Jesus Christ that Word of God Which became Man, shall by the Power of His divine Stirring or Motion separate from Himself all that belongeth not to Him.

Jacob Behmen.

EACH one of us who sins, with his own free will chooses punishment, and the blame lies with him who chooses.

Clement of Alexandria.

MARK this with thy inmost mind, that the wicked have ever something good in the midst of their evil. This is their punishment, and this may well be accounted unto them for good. But they whose wickedness goes all unpunished in this world are held by sin more grievous and more harmful than any punishment in this world. That their wickedness goes unpunished in this life is the clearest sign of the greatest sin in this world, and an earnest of the direst penalty hereafter. . . . Therefore purblind minds account it the greatest happiness that a man be allowed to work evil, and his deed to go unpunished.

Boethius.

punishment for evil is good

TUESDAY

ALL rising swelling Pride, which contendeth about Opinions, is an Image of Self. And whosoever hath not Faith and Humility, nor liveth in the Spirit of Christ, which is Love, is only armed with the Anger of God, and helpeth forward the Victory of the Imaginary Self, that is, the Kingdom of Darkness, and the Anger of God. For at the Day of Judgment all Self shall be given to the Darkness ; as shall also all the unprofitable Contentions of Men ; in which they seek not after Love, but merely after their Imaginary Self, that they may exalt themselves by exalting and establishing their Opinions. All whosoever in this Time of Strife, namely, from the Fall to the Resurrection are not zealous in the Spirit of Christ and desirous to promote Peace and Love, but seek and strive for themselves only, are of the Devil, and belong to the Pit of Darkness, and must consequently be separated from Christ. For in Heaven all serve God their Creator in humble Love.

Jacob Behmen.

WEDNESDAY

O GOD ! though mercy be in thee
 The greatest attribute we see,
 And the most needful for our sins ;
 Yet, when thy mercy nothing wins
 But mere disdain, let not man say
Thy arm doth sleep ; but write this day
 Thy judging one : Descend, descend !
 Make all things new, and without end !

Henry Vaughan.

NO one can ever fly from the punishment which it becomes him to suffer for unjust deeds. For the divine law is inevitable, containing at once in itself the power of accomplishing what it has now judged to be fit. In the meantime, he who suffers is ignorantly led to that which it is proper he should suffer, at length, like one wearied by the resistance which he has made, falling into a place adapted to him, he undergoes an involuntary suffering through a voluntary motion. In the law, however, it is promulgated how much and how long it is necessary to suffer. And again, at the same time a remission of punishment concurs with the power of flying from those places in which the punishment is inflicted, through a power of harmony by which all things are detained.

Plotinus.

THURSDAY

AT the Last Great Day God will cause the lost to perceive plainly the beauty of His Countenance and the treasures of His Goodness, so that they will long intensely, though vainly, to approach His Love. Those hapless souls, while perceiving the exceeding Beauty of God, will yet be powerless to love that which they hitherto rejected ; and the spectacle which should kindle fervent love in the will must tend instead to profound misery, in the remembrance that all this they have lost, a remembrance profitless now, when the season of repentance is past. And thus those that are lost will for ever be tormented by the knowledge of infinite happiness which they cannot share ; infinite love, which, having rejected when it was within their reach, they now can never attain. Their thirst will be all the more cruel because they will remember that the fountain was once open to them ; and though they may not share the brightness of the vision granted to God's Elect, we know that they shall see the Son of Man in His Glory, and realise as they behold it what they have lost. Those that are lost would reckon themselves saved could they hope ever to attain to the Love of God ; and the blessed would count themselves as lost were it possible for them ever to fall from it.

St Francis de Sales.

FRIDAY

O GREAT Mercy of God, I beseech Thee deliver me from the Bonds of Satan. I have no Refuge in any Thing, but only in Thy Holy Wounds and Death. Into Thee I sink down in the Anguish of my Conscience, do with me what Thou wilt. In Thee I will now live or die as pleaseth Thee, let me but die and perish in Thy Death ; do but bury me into Thy Death, that the Anguish of Hell may not touch me. How can I excuse myself before Thee, that knowest my Heart and Reins, and settest my Sins before mine Eyes ? I am guilty of them, and yield myself unto Thy Judgment ; accomplish Thy Judgment upon me, through the Death of my Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Jacob Behmen.

MAN, after death, is his own love or his own will. He remains to eternity such as he is as to his will or ruling love. The man who has heavenly and spiritual love comes into heaven, and the man who is in corporeal and worldly love, without heavenly and spiritual love, into hell.

Swedenborg.

LOVE and Death are so inextricably mingled in His Passion, that no one can truly appreciate one apart from the other. Our choice lies between eternal death and eternal love, and the whole secret of Christian wisdom lies in choosing rightly.

St Francis de Sales.

SATURDAY

EVERY one comes after death into his own society in which his spirit was while he lived in the world ; for every man as to his spirit is conjoined with some society either of heaven or hell. The spirit is brought to this society by successive steps, and at length enters within it. *Swedenborg.*

WHEN with these eyes, clos'd now by Thee
 But then restored,
 The great and white throne I shall see
 Of my dread Lord :
 And lowly kneeling, for the most
 Still then must kneel,
 Shall look on Him, at whose high cost
 Unseen such joys I feel

Whatever arguments or skill
 Wise heads shall use,
 Tears onely, and my blushes still
 I will produce.
 And should those speechless beggars fail,
 Which oft have won,
 Then taught by Thee I will prevail,
 And say, *Thy will be done !*

Henry Vaughan.

Third Sunday in Advent

YOUR refusing to be saved through the Son of God, whilst the Soul is in the redeemable state of this Life, may at the Separation of the Body, for aught you know, leave it in such a Hell as the infinite Love of God cannot deliver it from. For, first, you have no Kind or Degree of Proof, that your Soul is not that dark, self-tormenting, anguishing and imperishable Fire which has lost its own proper Light, and is only comforted by the Light of the Sun, till its Redemption be effected. Secondly, you have no Kind or Degree of Proof that God Himself can redeem, or save, or enlighten this dark Fire-Soul, any other Way than, as the Gospel proposes, by the Birth of the Son of God in it. Therefore your own Hearts must tell you, that for aught you know, Infidelity, or the refusing of this Birth of the Son of God, may, at the End of Life, leave you in such a state of Self-torment, as the infinite Love of God can in no way deliver you from.

William Law.

MONDAY

IT is indeed nothing else but hell itself in the souls of men that gives the devil such free entertainment there : the wills of men stamped with a diabolical form, and bearing the devil's image and inscription upon them, declare his right over them. Men are therefore so much captivated by him because they voluntarily take his yoke upon them. Could we, or would we, resist sin and Satan, they could not hurt us. Every thing is weak and impotent according to the distance it stands from God, who is the only fountain of life and power. *John Smith.*

IT is impossible to express how great is the suffering of the soul, and how different from that of the body, unless a person has experienced it ; and our Lord Himself wishes us to understand this, in order that we may know the better how much we owe Him for having conducted us to a state of life, which we hope, in His mercy, will be the means of delivering us from those miseries ; and may He pardon our sins also. *St Teresa.*

TUESDAY

THE case of the wicked Soul is this : It will not in the Time of this Life enter into the Divine Resignation of its Will, but goeth on continually in its own Lust and Falsehood, in the Will of the Devil. It receiveth into itself nothing but Wickedness, Lies, Pride, Covetousness, Envy, and Anger, and yieldeth its Will unto them. Now such a Soul cannot come to divine Rest, for God's Anger is manifested in it. And therefore when the Body parteth from it, then its eternal Grief and Despair begin. For it perceiveth and findeth that it is become a mere self-tormenting Abomination, and is ashamed to strive to enter with its false Will into God. Nay, it cannot ; for it is captivated in the Wrath, and is itself mere Wrath, and hath shut itself up therein by its false and evil Desire, which it hath raised up in itself. And seeing the Light of God shineth not in it, and His Love toucheth it not, therefore it is a great Darkness and an aching, anguishing Source of Fire, which carrieth Hell in itself, and cannot reach the Light of God. Thus it dwelleth in itself in Hell, and needeth no entering into it, for wheresoever it is, it is in Hell.

Jacob Behmen.

WEDNESDAY

SINS are those fiery snakes which will eternally last and torment all damned spirits. Every man's hell arises from the bottom of his own soul.

John Smith.

SINCE the cleansed and purified spirit can only find its rest in God, for Whom it has been created, so the soul which is in mortal sin can find no other place than hell ; God assigns it for its end. At the moment of separation of soul and body, the soul which quitted its envelope in a state of mortal sin betakes itself to its destined place ; the nature itself of sin leads it there ; and if, in that moment, it did not find this provision issuing from the justice of God, it would plunge into a worse hell than that which exists ; for it would be outside an ordinance which still partakes of the Divine mercy, and where the torment is less than the soul deserves. Therefore, not being able to find a more fitting place, nor a lesser evil for itself (by the Divine ordering), thither it rushes, as to its own place.

ENT

St Catherine of Genoa.

THURSDAY

HELL is through the whole world, and dwelleth and worketh only in itself, and in that wherein the Foundation of Hell is manifested, viz : in Self, and in the false and evil Will. The visible World hath both Heaven and Hell in it. Man, as to his temporal Life, is only of the visible World, and therefore during the Time of this Life he seeth not the spiritual World. For the outward World with its Substance is a Cover to the Spiritual World as the Body is to the Soul. But when the outward Man dieth, then the spiritual World is manifested in and to the Soul, either in the eternal Light with the holy Angels, or in the eternal Darkness with the Devils.

Jacob Behmen.

WE must not suffer a man to say that they are miserable who are punished ; and that it is God who does these things. But if they say that the wicked, as being miserable, needed correction ; and that, in being punished, they were profited by God, we may suffer the assertion.

Plato.

FRIDAY

BODILY sufferings were nothing in comparison with the anguish of my soul, a sense of oppression, of stifling, and of pain so keen, accompanied by so hopeless and cruel an infliction that I knew not how to speak of it. If I said that the soul is continually being torn from the body, it would be nothing, for that implies the destruction of life by the hands of another : but here it is the soul itself that is tearing itself in pieces. I cannot describe that inward fire or that despair, surpassing all torments and all pain. I did not see who it was that tormented me, but I felt myself on fire, and torn to pieces, as it seemed to me ; and, I repeat it, this inward fire and despair are the greatest torments of all. Afterwards I had another most fearful vision, in which I saw the punishment of certain sins ; but because I felt none of the pain, my terror was not so great. In the former vision, our Lord made me really feel those torments, and that anguish of spirit, just as if I had been suffering them in the body there. I know not how it was, but I understood distinctly that it was a great mercy that our Lord would have me see with mine own eyes the very place from which His compassion saved me. I have listened to people speaking of these things, and at these times dwelt on the various torments of hell, though not often, because my soul made no progress by the way of fear. But all is as nothing before this.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

THE eternal Darkness of the Soul is Hell, viz : an aching Source of Anguish, which is called the Anger of God ; but the eternal Light in the Soul is the Kingdom of Heaven, where the fiery Anguish of Darkness is turned into Joy. *Jacob Behmen.*

HE that knows the Ground and Essences of his Soul to be so many Essences of Sin, which form Sin as they form his Life, entirely incapable of producing any Good, till a Birth from God has arisen in them ; such a one can neither place his Redemption where it is not, nor seek it coolly and negligently where it is. For knowing that it is the Hell within his own Nature that only wants to be destroyed, he is intent only upon bringing Destruction upon that ; and this secures him from false Religion. And knowing that this inward Hell cannot be destroyed, unless God becomes his Redeemer or Regenerator in the Ground of his Soul ; this makes him believe all, expect all, and hope all from his Saviour Jesus Christ alone. *William Law.*

Fourth Sunday in Advent

THE very blessed in Paradise, beholding the infinite Beauty of God, would faint and fail from longing to love Him more if His most Holy Will did not fill them with His own sweet Rest. But they love His sovereign Will so entirely that theirs is wholly merged in it, and they rest content in His Content, willing to submit to the limit Love puts to love. Were it not so, their love would be alike delicious and poignant—delicious in the possession of so great a gift, poignant in the intensity of desire for more. Thus God in His Wisdom sends perpetual shafts into the hearts of those who love Him, to teach them that they do not love Him nearly so much as He deserves to be loved. And be sure that the man who does not crave to love God more does not as yet love Him well enough. There is no ‘enough’; and he who would stop short in what he has attained, has attained but little, be sure.

St Francis de Sales.

HEAVEN is through the whole World, and without the World all over the universal System of Nature without being divided or included in a Place, and worketh through the divine Manifestation, but only in itself, and in that which cometh into it, or in that wherein it becometh manifest; and there God is revealed. For Heaven is nothing but a Manifestation of the Eternal One, wherein all worketh and willeth in quiet Love.

Jacob Behmen.

MONDAY

THEY who are not instructed about heaven, and the way to heaven, and the life of heaven with man, suppose that entrance into heaven is only from mercy which is granted to those who are in faith, and for whom the Lord intercedes, thus that it is merely admission by favour. But these know nothing of man, that he is altogether such as his life is ; that his life is such as his love is, and that the whole man is his own love. *Swedenborg.*

ABOUT the holy citie rolls a flood
 Of molten crystal, like a sea of glasse :
 On which weake streame a strong foundation stood :
 Of living diamonds the building was,
 That all things else, besides itselfe, did passe :
 Her streetes, instead of stones, the starres did pave,
 And little pearles, for dust, it seem'd to have ;
 On which soft-streaming manna, like pure snowe, did
 wave.

In midst of this citie celestiall,
 Where the Eternal Temple should have rose,
 Lightened the Idea Beatifical :
 God, and beginning of each thing that growes ;
 Whose selfe no end, nor yet beginning knowes ;
 That hath no eyes to see, nor ears to heare ;
 Yet sees, and heares, and is all-eye, all-eare ;
 That nowhere is contain'd, and yet is every where.
Giles Fletcher.

TUESDAY

IT is a troublesome Thing to mortify the evil Will ; none are willing to do it. We would all gladly be the Children of God, if we might be so with this rough Garment of fallen Nature about us. But that cannot be. God will have no Sinners in Heaven, but only such as are born anew and become Children, and so have put on Heaven. *Jacob Behmen.*

GOD has prepared Paradise for those He foreknows as His ; let us strive to be truly His in faith and in works, and He will be ours in glory. And it rests with us to be His ; for though it comes of God's Gift, He never refuses that Gift to any, but offers it freely to all who will heartily consent to receive it. See then, how earnestly God desires that we be His, since to that end He has made Himself wholly ours, yielding up to us both His Life and His Death ; His Life, that we might be delivered from eternal death ; His Death, that we might attain eternal life. Be it ours so to live that we may be ever His in this life, and yet more for eternity. *St Francis de Sales.*

WEDNESDAY

FAIRE is the heaven where happy soules have
place,

In full enjoyment of felicitie,
Whence they doe still behold the glorious face
Of the Divine Eternall Majestie ;
More faire is that, where those Idees on hie
Enraunged be, which Plato so admyred,
And pure Intelligences from God inspyred.

Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins,
Which all with golden wings are overdight,
And those eternall burning Seraphins,
Which from their faces dart out fierie light ;
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
Be th' Angels and Archangels, which attend
On God's owne person, without rest or end.

These then in faire each other farre excelling,
As to the Highest they approach more neare,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling,
Fairer than all the rest which there appeare,
Though all their beauties joynd together were ;
How then can mortall tongue hope to expresse
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse ?

Spenser.

THURSDAY

SAINTS like St Paul and St Martin, who saw Heaven standing open before them, and at the same time endless calls to labour on earth, were able to feel absolute indifference, and to desire nothing save the fulfilment of God's Will. Not even Paradise itself had greater attractions for them than this troublous world, so long as God's Will called them to the one rather than the other. Toil was a paradise to them while His Will was toil; Paradise had been no attraction while His Will was otherwise.

St Francis de Sales.

MAN cannot be formed for heaven but by means of the world; the ultimate effects are these in which the affections of every one must be terminated; and unless this affection exerts itself, or pours itself forth into acts,—which is done in the society of many,—it is suffocated at length, to such a degree that man no longer regards his neighbour, but himself alone. For as far as man loves himself and the world, and regards himself and the world in everything, so far he alienates himself from the Divine, and removes himself from heaven.

Swedenborg.

FRIDAY

THE Lord never acts contrary to order, because He Himself is order. Divine order is heaven with man, but this order man has perverted in himself by a life contrary to the laws of order, which are Divine truths. Into this order, man is brought back by the Lord out of pure mercy, by means of the laws of order; and so far as he is brought back, so far he receives heaven in himself; and he who receives heaven in himself comes into heaven. *Swedenborg.*

Are there any miracles?

I AM of opinion that the expression by which God is said to be “all in all,” means that He is “all” in each individual person. Now He will be “all in all” in each individual in this way: when all which any rational understanding, cleansed from the dregs of every sort of vice, and with every cloud of wickedness completely swept away, can either feel, or understand, or think, will be wholly God: and when it will no longer behold or retain anything else than God, but when God will be the measure and standard of all its movements: and thus God will be “all,” for there will no longer be any distinction of good and evil, seeing evil nowhere exists; for God is all things, and to Him no evil is near: nor will there be any longer a desire to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, on the part of him who is always in the possession of good, and to whom God is all.

Origen.

SATURDAY

I SAW the Lord take no place in His own house, but I saw Him royally reign in His house, fulfilling it with joy and mirth, Himself endlessly to gladden and to solace His dearworthy friends, full homely and full courteously, with marvellous melody of endless love, in His own fair blessed Countenance. Which glorious Countenance of the Godhead filleth the Heavens with joy and bliss. God shewed three degrees of bliss that every soul shall have in Heaven that willingly hath served God in any degree in earth. The first is the worshipful thanks of our Lord God that he shall receive when he is delivered of pain. This thanking is so high and so worshipful that the soul thinketh it filleth him though there were no more. For methought that all the pain and travail that might be suffered by all living men might not deserve the worshipful thanks that one man shall have that willingly hath served God. The second is that all the blessed creatures that are in Heaven shall see that worshipful thanking, and He maketh His service known to all that are in Heaven. The third is, that as new and as gladdening as it is received in that time, right so shall it last without end. For I saw that whene'er what time a man or woman is truly turned to God,—for one day's service and for his endless will he shall have all these three degrees of bliss. And the more the loving soul seeth this courtesy of God, the liefer he is to serve Him all the days of his life.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

Christmas Day

THE God of power, as He did ride
In His majestick robes of glorie,
Resolv'd to light ; and so one day
He did descend, undressing all the way.

The starres His tire of light, and rings obtain'd,
The cloud His bow, the fire His spear,
The sky His azure mantle gain'd.
And when they ask'd, what He would wear ;
He smil'd and said as He did go,
He had new clothes a making here below.

George Herbert.

THE kindest thing that God ever did to men, was
that He became a man. *Eckhart.*

A CHILD He was, and had not learnt to speake,
That with His word, the world before did make ;
His mother's armes Him bore, He was so weake,
That with one hand the vaults of Heav'n could shake ;
See how small roome my infant Lord doth take,
Whom all the world is not enough to hold !
Who of His yeares, or of His age hath told ?
Never such age so young, never a child so old.

Giles Fletcher.

DECEMBER 26

A WAKE, glad heart ! get up and Sing !
It is the Birthday of thy King.

Awake ! awake !

The Sun doth shake

Light from his locks, and, all the way
Breathing Perfumes, doth spice the day.

I would I had in my best part
Fit Roomes for thee ! or that my heart

Were so clean as

Thy manger was !

But I am all filth, and obscene
Yet, if thou wilt, thou canst make clean.

Sweet Jesu ! will then ; Let no more
This Leper haunt and soyl thy door !

Cure him, Ease him,

O release him !

And let once more, by mystick birth,
The Lord of life be born in Earth.

Henry Vaughan.

DECEMBER 27

SALVATION is not forgiveness of sin : it is not the remission of a penalty : it is not a safety. No, it is the blessed and holy purpose of God's love accomplished in the poor fallen creature's restoration to the divine image. And to this end is the news of God's love in this great work declared to men, that they hearing it may have confidence in Him who hath thus loved them, and so open their hearts to let in His Spirit. So we have no need now to go out of our nature to meet God, and to get the eternal life, for God is in our own flesh, and the eternal life is in our own flesh, and we have but to know this loving God, and the longings of His heart over us, and to give Him our confidence in order to receive His Spirit into us.

Erskine of Linlathen.

WHAT profits it that Christ is born,
And bringeth childhood back to men,
Unless our long-lost right we mourn,
And win through penitence again,
And lead a God-like life on earth,
As children of the second birth ?

Lyra Germanica.

DECEMBER 28

THIS made the angel call at reeds and thatch,
Yet where the shepherds watch, . . .
No costly pride, no soft-cloath'd luxurie,
In those thin Cels could lie ;
Each stirring wind and storm blew through their Cots,
Which never harbour'd plots ;
Only Content and love and humble joys
Lived there without all noise :
Perhaps some harmless Cares for the next day
Did in their bosomes play,
As where to lead their sheep, what silent nook,
What springs or shades to look ;
But that was all ; And now with gladsome care
They for the town prepare ;
They leave their flock, and in a busie talk
All towards Bethlem walk
To see their soul's great shepheard, who was come
To bring all straglers home ;
Where now they find him out, and, taught before,
That Lamb of God adore,
That Lamb whose daies great Kings and Prophets
wish'd
And long'd to see, but miss'd.
The first light they beheld was bright and gay,
And turn'd their night to day ;
But to this later light they saw in him,
Their day was dark and dim.

Henry Vaughan.

DECEMBER 29

THAT he whom the Sun serves, should faintly
peepe

Through clouds of Infant flesh : that he the old
Eternall Word should be a child, and weepe.

That he who made the fire, should feare the cold ;
That Heav'ns high Majesty his Court should keepe
In a clay cottage, by each blast control'd.

That Glories self should serve our Griefs and feares :
And free Eternity, submit to yeares. *Crashaw.*

GOD is all Love, and nothing but Love and Goodness can come from Him. He is as far from Anger in Himself, as from Pain and Darkness. But when the fallen Soul of Man had awakened in itself a wrathful, self-tormenting Fire, which could never be put out by itself, which could never be relieved by the natural Power of any Creature whatsoever, then the Son of God, by a Love, greater than that which created the World, became Man, and gave His own Blood and Life into the fallen Soul, that it might, through His Life in it, be raised, quickened, and born again into its first state of inward Peace and Delight, Glory and Perfection, never to be lost any more.

William Law.

DECEMBER 30

HOW kind is heav'n to man ! If here
 One sinner doth amend,
 Strait there is Joy, and ev'ry sphere
 In musick doth Contend.
 And shall we then no voices lift ?
 Are mercy and salvation
 Not worth our thanks ? Is life a gift
 Of no more acceptance ?
 Shall he that did come down from thence,
 And here for us was slain,
 Shall he be now cast off ? no sense
 Of all his woes remain ?
 Can neither Love nor suff'rings bind ?
 Are we all stone and Earth ?
 Neither his bloody passion mind,
 Nor one day blesse his birth ?
Henry Vaughan.

HE that reads or sings for the sake of his sick
 brother, sweetly plays on the harp with the
 angels before the cradle of Jesus. *Thomas à Kempis.*

THE desires and perceptions of man untaught by
 anything but organs of sense must be limited to
 objects of sense.
 Therefore God becomes as we are, that we may
 be as He is. *Blake.*

DECEMBER 31

THERE is in Jesus Christ, our Lord Himself, a portion of the flesh and blood of every one of us. Where any part of me reigns, there I understand myself to reign. Where my flesh is glorified, there do I conceive myself to be glorious. Where my blood doth bear dominion, there do I find myself to rule. Though I be a sinner, yet I cannot diffide through the communication of this grace. Though my sins keep me back, yet my substance calls me on. Though my offences shut me out, yet my communion of nature with Him, rejects me not. For God is not so cruel that He can forget me, and not remember the thing which He bears about Himself; and which for my sake He took upon Him, and which for my sake He sought. *St Augustine.*

FINALLY, be of hope, suffer, be silent and patient : let nothing affright thee ! all of it will have a time to end : God only is He that is unchangeable : patience brings a man to everything. He that hath God, hath all things ; and he that hath Him not, hath nothing. *Molinos,*

JANUARY I

GOD liveth ever !

Wherefore, Soul, despair thou never !
Say, shall He slumber, shall He sleep,
Who gave the eye its power to see ?
Shall He not hear His children weep,
Who made the ear so wondrously ?
God is God ; He sees and hears
All their troubles, all their tears.
Soul, forget not 'mid thy pains,
God o'er all for ever reigns.

Lyra Germanica.

FOR what good doth it to the Soul to know the
Way to God, if it will not walk therein, but go
on in a contrary Path ? What good will it do the
Soul to comfort itself with the Filiation of Christ,
with His Passion and Death, and so flatter itself with
the Hopes of getting the Patrimony thereby, if it
will not enter into the Filial Birth, that it may be a
true Child, born out of the Spirit of Christ, out of
His Suffering, Death, and Resurrection ? Surely the
Tickling and Flattering itself with Christ's Merits
without the true innate Childship, is Falsehood and a
Lie, whosoever he be that teacheth it.

Jacob Behmen.

JANUARY 2

I FEEL that holiness consists in hearing Christ and following Him step by step in the minutest part of the minutest duty, and in acknowledging an ordinance of Christ in all the natural and social relations.

Erskine of Linlathen.

THE watchfulness which Jesus Christ commands, is a faithful care to love always and to fulfil the will of God at the present moment, according to the indications we have of it : it does not consist in worrying ourselves, in putting ourselves to torture, and in being ceaselessly occupied with ourselves ; but rather in lifting our eyes to God, from whence comes our only help against ourselves.

Fénelon.

WE are not to suppose that He was entrusted with the ministry of each individual work by detailed commission, a condition distinctly menial and quite inadequate to the divine dignity. Rather was the Word full of His Father's excellences : He shines forth from the Father and does all things according to the likeness of Him that begat Him.

St Basil.

JANUARY 3

DO not let us understand by what is called a "commandment" a peremptory mandate delivered by organs of speech, and giving orders to the Son, as to a subordinate, concerning what He ought to do. Let us rather, in a sense befitting the Godhead, perceive a transmission of will, like the reflexion of an object in a mirror, passing without note of time from Father to Son. *St Basil.*

IT is not enough to think about God, for your thoughts will turn elsewhere, and then you will lose hold of God. You must have God rooted in your being, in the depths to which thoughts do not reach. He it is that so possesses God, who is risen above himself by virtue of love, and who finds that the Lord is higher than the reflections and the powers of man. *Ruysbroek.*

WHEN He says, "Come unto me, and learn of me;" we are not to think merely that we have to learn something; but we have to know that if we learn it in any other way than from Jesus, it is a lost learning. *Erskine of Linlathen.*

JANUARY 4

HE who neither possesses, nor sees, nor loves but God, and all things in the sight of God, he is free from multiplicity, free from place, free from men. He finds God in every thing, in every place, in every act. God acts with him : he who causes an action is its principal author. If your love is real, if you look only to God in every act, God is the principal author of all your actions. No one can love God without God, nor surpass nature by the forces of nature. Self-denial is a work above nature.

from Angel Ruysbroek.

EVERY acting of the flesh is a seeking of gratification to itself on this side of death ; it may acknowledge God as the giver or the guard of its happiness, but God is not its happiness Himself. This is idolatry : for that which is our happiness is really our God.

Erskine of Linlathen.

THOU wilt find thyself far from perfection if thou dost not find God in everything. *Molinos.*

JANUARY 5

IF thou wilt be well with God, and have grace to rule thy life aright, and come to the joy of love : this name Jesus fasten it so fast in thy heart that it never come out of thy thought. And when thou speakest to Him, and sayest "Jesus" through custom, it shall be in thine ears joy, in thy mouth honey, in thy heart melody. *Richard Rolle.*

KNOW, that when you seek your own, you never find God there, till you seek God alone. You seek something with God, and do with Him just as though you made Him a candle, with which to look for something : and having found it, you throw the candle away. *Eckhart.*

TO find God everywhere, you must everywhere seek for nothing but Him. *Ruysbroek.*

Epiphany

THOU cam'st from Heaven to Earth, that we
Might go from earth to Heaven with Thee :
And though Thou found'st no welcome here,
Thou didst provide us mansions there.
A stable was thy Court, and when
Men turned to beasts, beasts would be men :
They were thy courtiers ; others none ;
And their poor manger was thy throne.
No swaddling silks Thy limbs did fold,
Though Thou couldst turn Thy rays to gold.
No rockers waited on Thy birth,
No cradles stirred, nor songs of mirth ;
But her chaste lap and sacred breast,
Which lodged Thee first, did give Thee rest.
But stay ! what light is that doth stream
And drop here in a gilded beam ?
It is Thy star runs page, and brings
Thy tributary Eastern Kings.
Lord, grant some light to us ; that we
May find with them the way to Thee !
Behold what mists eclipse the day !
How dark it is ! Shed down one ray,
To guide us out of this dark night,
And say once more " Let there be light ! "

Henry Vaughan.

(Take any days that may occur between Epiphany and the First Sunday after, from the week of the Sixth Sunday after).

First Sunday after Epiphany

THE natural man is surrounded with death, and which way soever he turns himself, he hath a sword presented to his sight : just as when one turns on this, and on that side should look about him, and still somebody runs before his face : so also is judgment always meeting with the natural man, ready to snatch away his life, which way soever he turns himself. At last he yields up himself when he can no more make his escape. Myrrh was the last gift. For it is written ; They offered Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

Matthew Weyer.

LORD, this is a great marvel to my heart ; I would wish to seek Thy divinity, and Thou shewest me Thy humanity ; I would wish to seek Thy sweetness, and Thou settest before me Thy bitterness.

Suso.

WHAT profits it that Christ hath deign'd
 To wear our mortal nature thus,
 If we ourselves have ne'er attained
 That God reveal Himself in us ?
 The pure and virgin soul alone
 He chooseth for His earthly throne.

Lyra Germanica.

MONDAY

HOLY The God, The Father of the Universals,
 whose counsel is perfected by His own powers.
 Holy The God Who willeth to be known and is
 known by His own. Holy Thou art Who by Word
 hast constituted the Entities. Thou art Holy, of
 Whom all nature was born, Thou art Holy Whom
 the nature formed not. Thou art Holy Who art
 stronger than all power. Thou art Holy Who art
 greater than all excellence. Thou art Holy Who art
 superior to praises. Accept rational sacrifices pure
 from soul and heart intent upon Thee, O unspeakable,
 ineffable, invoked by silence ! To me, beseeching
 that I stray not from the knowledge that is according
 to our essence, assent ; and strengthen me, and with
 this grace enlighten those who are in ignorance,
 brethren of my race, but sons of Thee ! Wherefore
 I believe Thee, and bear witness ; I pass into Life
 and Light. Blessed art Thou, Father ! Thy Man
 wisheth to be sanctified with Thee, as Thou hast
 delivered to him the whole power to be so.

Hermes Trismegistus.

HE is a path, if any be misled.
 He is a robe, if any naked be ;
 If any chance to hunger, He is bread,
 If any be a bondman, He is free,
 If any be but weake, howe strong is He !

To dead men life He is, to sicke men health,
 To blinde men sight, and to the needie wealth ;
 A pleasure without losse, a treasure without stealth.

Giles Fletcher.

TUESDAY

I WISH a greater Knowledge than to attain
 The knowledge of my self ; a greater Gain
 Than to augment my self ; a greater Treasure
 Than to enjoy my self ; a greater Pleasure
 Than to content my self ; how slight and vain
 Is all Self-knowledge, Pleasure, Treasure, Gain :
 Unless my better Knowledge could retrieve
 My Christ ; unless my better Gain to thrive
 In Christ ; unless my better Wealth grow rich
 In Christ ; unless my better Pleasure pitch
 On Christ ; or else my Knowledge will proclaim
 To my own heart, how ignorant I am :
 Or else my Gain, so ill improved, will shame
 My Trade, and shew how much declined I am :
 Or else my Treasure will but blot my name
 With Bankrupt, and divulge how poor I am :
 Or else my Pleasures that so much inflame
 My thoughts, will blab how full of sores I am :
 Lord, keep me from my self, 'tis best for me,
 Never to own my self, if not in Thee.

Quarles.

WEDNESDAY

CEASE thee, my tongue ! and lend unto my mynd
 Leave to bethinke how great that beautie is,
 Whose utmost parts so beautifull I find ;
 How much more those essentiall parts of His,
 His truth, His love, His wisdom, and His bliss,
 His grace, His doome, His mercy and His might,
 By which He lends us of Himselfe a sight !

Those unto all He daily doth display,
 And shew Himself in th' image of His grace,
 As in a looking-glasse, through which He may
 Be seene of all His creatures vile and base,
 That are unable else to see His face,
 His glorious face ! which glistereth else so bright,
 That th' Angels selves can not endure His sight.

Spenser.

AS the Son of God is the Brightness and Glory of
 the Father, so no soul, made in the Likeness of
 God is capable of any Degree of Brightness and Glory,
 but so far as the Birth of the Son of God is in it ;
 therefore to reject this Birth, to refuse this Method
 of Redemption, is to reject all the Goodness, that the
 Divine Nature itself hath for us. *William Law.*

THURSDAY

NOW it is a plain, manifest Doctrine of the holy Scriptures, that Man by the Fall is in such a Condition that there was no help or Remedy for him either in the Height above, or in the Depth below, but by the Son of God's becoming incarnate, and taking the fallen Nature upon Him. If this *alone* could be the Remedy, does not this enough shew us the Disease? Does not this speak plainly enough *what* it was that Man had lost by his Fall, namely the Birth of the Son of God in his Soul; and therefore it was that only the Son of God in so mysterious a manner, could be his Redeemer? If he had lost *less*, a less Power could have redeemed him. If he had lost something *else*, the Restoration of that something would have been his Redemption. But since it is an open, undeniable Doctrine of the Gospel, that there can be no Salvation for Mankind but in the Name and by the Power of the Son of God, by His being united to the fallen Nature, and so raising His own Birth and Life in it, is it not sufficiently declared to us that what was lost by the Fall, was the Birth of the Son of God in the Soul?

William Law.

FRIDAY

ACQUAINT thyself with God, if thou wouldst
taste

His works. Admitted once to His embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before ;
Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart,
Made pure, shall relish with divine delight,
Till thee unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.

Cowper.

LET us be careful that the Lord doth not visit us
in vain, but that He may always find us with
the doors shut upon our pleasure-loving feelings and
inclinations, and intent upon our own heart, and on
the presence of Jesus within us. Let us note how
the power of His Resurrection makes itself felt
secretly, to put all false life to flight and to death,
that we may henceforth be inwardly penetrated
by His glorious Life, and grow up into His image.
Therein are locked up greater treasures than our dim,
feeble faith can grasp ; thenceforward are they all for
us, if we do not suffer the serpent to beguile us from
our single mind in Christ, and intend Him alone and
nothing besides.

Tersteegen.

SATURDAY

TO see a glorious fountain and an end,
 To see all creatures tend
 To thy advancement, and so sweetly close
 In thy repose : to see them shine
 In use, in worth, in service, and even foes
 Among the rest made thine ;
 To see all these unite at once in thee
 Is to behold felicity.

To see the *fountain* is a blessed thing,
 It is to see the King
 Of Glory face to face : But yet the End,
 The glorious, wondrous End is more ;
 And yet the fountain there we comprehend,
 The spring we there adore ;
 For in the End, the fountain best is shewn,
 As by effects the cause is known.

From one, to one, in one to see *All Things*,
 To see the King of Kings
 But once in two ; to see His endless treasures
 Made all mine own, myself the end
 Of all his labours ! 'Tis the Life of Pleasures !
 To see myself His friend !
 Who all things finds conjoined in Him alone,
 Sees and enjoys the Holy One.

Traherne.

Second Sunday after Epiphany

HEALÉ then these waters, Lord ; or bring thy
 flock,
 Since these are troubled, to the springing rock ;
 Looke down, great Master of the feast ; O shine,
 And turn once more our Water into Wine !

Henry Vaughan.

MAN, what can seem to thee bitter or hard to
 bear, when thou dost rightly consider that He,
 who was in the form of God, and from all eternity
 in the light of the Holiest, and Who was born there-
 from, was as a beam and as the substance of God :
 that He comes into the cell and the slime of thy
 perverted nature, which is so unclean that all things,
 however pure in themselves, become impure and
 imperfect as they approach it ; and that He, for thy
 sake willed to become wholly immured therein ?

Eckhart.

MONDAY

IN respect of the three spiritual vices of envy, wrath and slothfulness, the soul is also purged in this drought of the appetite, and acquires the opposite virtues thereto. For, softened and humiliated by the aridnesses and difficulties and other temptations and trials wherein God proves her, she becomes gentle in regard to God, and in regard to herself, and also as regards her neighbour. So that she no longer waxes passionately wrathful against herself for her own faults, nor against her neighbours for theirs, nor does she harbour insolent discontent and displeasure against God, because He does not make her righteous all at once. Then as to envy, she now also bears charity towards others ; for if she feels any envy, it is no longer vicious as before, when it was grievous to her that others should be preferred before her, and bear away the palm : for to her now, at length, it has been given in the perception of her own utter misery ; and the envy she feels (if any there is) is virtuous, desiring to imitate them, the which is great virtue. Neither is the sluggishness and tediousness she now feels in spiritual things vicious as of yore ; for that she entertained proceeded from the spiritual relishes which at times she experienced, and tried to procure when they were absent.

St John of the Cross.

TUESDAY

GOD calls us that we may know Christ, in order that we may accept His covenant, and having accepted it, may be righteous, and being righteous, that He may be able to shew us His presence. We are not to rest contented with knowing Christ, nor with being righteous, but, going on, to desire to see the presence of God, and with continuous prayer to supplicate of God that He may shew it us daily less veiled and more clearly, until that in the life eternal we may see Him face to face, even as He is. This ought to be our aim ; in this we ought evermore to occupy ourselves.

Juan de Valdès.

WE must gaze closely and deeply into the glorious image of our Lord Jesus Christ, and maintain a continual earnest effort and aspiration after it. Then look attentively at thyself, how unlike thou art to this image, and behold thy own littleness. Here will thy Lord let thee rest on Him.

Tauler.

WEDNESDAY

YIELD thyself blindly to God in thy whole circumstances, and the entire care of thy soul. He is the Blessing-maker, and not we.

Tersteegen.

IT behoves everyone who would liberate himself from doubts and fears, to look solely upon Christ crucified, risen, and glorified ; and listening to the voice of the gospel, he should know for certain that God does not consider him for what he is in himself, but for that which he is, being incorporated into Christ ; holding firmly that as to God, he is in himself that which he is in Christ ; he will hold as equally certain that he is dead with Christ upon the cross ; that he is risen with Christ ; that he is glorified with Christ ; and in this manner he will be sure that he is, and that he perseveres in the grace of God ; and he will love and he will long for that glorious day in which the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, will shew Himself victorious and triumphant.

Juan de Valdés.

THURSDAY

MANY and great gifts of the Holy Spirit do come really into a man, which yet are not regeneration ; but they go and come. Whereas that is regeneration when and where God hath planted His habitation, and God is become one with man. In God, neither the world, nor pleasure, nor joy is suffered ; nature must wait all these when the mind standeth in God.

Matthew Weyer.

SIN ! wilt thou vanquish me !
 And shall I yield the victory ?
 Shall all my joys be spoiled,
 And pleasures soiled,
 By thee !
 Shall I remain
 As one that's slain

And never more lift up the head ?

Is not my Saviour dead !
 His Blood, thy bane ; my balsam, bliss, joy, wine,
 Shall thee destroy ; heal, feed, make me Divine.

Traherne.



FRIDAY

DO not love your sins. When the whole might of sin and evil is stirring in you, and you are conscious of nothing but temptations on all sides, say in all sincerity to God : Lord, I *will* not sin. Draw back your will, gently but wholly, from evil, and incline it towards God, as well as you can. In Him and near Him, no evil can reach you. But if you cannot do this, just endure quietly, as a rock endures the raging of the sea, and as a tree, hail and tempest, till it is clear once more. And if you should seem to have consented, say again with your whole heart : Lord, I *will* not sin. And do not disturb yourself about your sins. We do not gain anything by our rebelliousness at the feeling of sin and of trial beyond making the evil worse, and falling into sin instead of enduring temptation. A disquieted heart is already half overcome, and never accomplishes anything good. It is certain that when the cunning serpent sees that we are frightened of every shadow, it plagues us very thoroughly, even if it does not do more than waste our time through constant anxiety. Be comforted, and not discouraged, and wait for the Lord.

Tersteegen.

SATURDAY

THAT all things should be mine,
 This makes His beauty most Divine.
 But that they all more rich should be,
 And far more brightly shine,
 As used by me ;
 It ravisheth my Soul to see the End,
 To which this work so wonderful doth tend.

Am I a glorious spring
 Of joys and riches to my King ?
 Are men made Gods ? And may they see
 So wonderful a thing
 As God in me ?
 And is my Soul a mirror that must shine
 Even like the Sun, and be far more divine ?
 Thy Soul, O God, doth prize
 The seas, the earth, our souls, the skies ;
 As we return the same to Thee
 They more delight Thine eyes
 And sweeter be
 As unto Thee we offer up the same,
 Than as to us from Thee at first they came,
 O how doth Sacred Love
 His gifts refine, exalt, improve !
 Our love to creatures makes them be
 In Thine esteem above
 Themselves to Thee !
 O here His goodness evermore admire.
 He made our Souls to make His creatures higher.

Traherne.

Third Sunday after Epiphany

HE that runneth in his own conceit hardeneth himself, for he will needs be Christ. God's hardening is, when He letteth one run on whither he will : God knoweth His very well. Why should a man pour Oil into those wounds to which it is poison, the Sore will be but the larger. Who will help him who himself will not : Or shall men cast Pearls before Swine : If a man lets the freewill go whither it will, then it cometh into its Father's Native Country, out of which it is gone forth : why doth Man lend the Devil his heart, that he may introduce an evil Will or Desire thereinto ?

Jacob Behmen.

I WAS a stricken deer that left the herd
 Long since ; with many an arrow deep infix'd
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
 There was I found by One who had Himself
 Been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore,
 And in His hands and feet, the cruel scars.
 With gentle force soliciting the darts,
 He drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live.

Cowper.

MONDAY

O BLESSED well of love, o flower of grace,
 O glorious Morning starre, o lampe of light,
 Most lively image of Thy Father's Face,
 Eternall King of glorie, Lord of might,
 Meeke lambe of God before all worlds behight,
 How can we Thee requite for all this good ?
 Or what can prize that Thy most precious blood ?

Spenser.

THOU speakest of thy sins and miseries, which do indeed make a barrier between God and us : but, if I know Jesus ever so little, I think, when I read or hear such complaints, of practised physicians, when they are confronted with a common disease : they are not unprovided, they have medicines for it that never fail. So say I now : Jesus knows plenty of means of healing, shew Him all thy wounds with a weeping heart, ask in humility and confidence for His mighty healing, and that He may heal thee throughly ; but this may not happen unless He, for a while, increases thy wounds by a deep sense of thy sin, misery and darkness, which indeed is meant in love that thou hereafter, yea, for ever, mayest feel no farther need. Meanwhile, endeavour to walk simply in His love ; to him who loves much will many sins be forgiven : but remember that love does not consist in receiving something delightful from God, or in finding everything in Christianity easy and cheerful. These are indeed good, and gifts of God ; but love is properly : when a man from his heart desires willingly to please God in the best way he can.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

IT is fitting that the bride of Christ be humble and gentle and patient ; and she will be as humble as she is patient, and as patient as she is humble. But we cannot attain this virtue of humility except by true knowledge of ourselves, knowing our misery and frailty and sins ; wherefore we ought always to abide low and humble. But to abide wholly in such knowledge of one's self would not be good, because the soul would fall into weariness and confusion ; and from confusion it would fall into despair : so the devil would like nothing better than to make us fall into confusion, to drive us afterward to despair. We ought then to abide in the knowledge of the goodness of God in Himself, perceiving that He has created us in His image and likeness, and re-created us in grace by the Blood of His only-begotten Son, the sweet incarnate Lord ; and reflecting how continually the goodness of God works in us. But see, that to abide entirely in this knowledge of God would not be good, because the soul would fall into presumption and pride. So it befits us to have one mixed with the other—that is, to abide in the holy knowledge of the goodness of God, and also in the knowledge of ourselves : and so shall we be humble, patient and gentle.

St Catherine of Siena.

WEDNESDAY

MAKE Thy Son to us all which Thou hast appointed Him to be unto sinners. Make Him to us wisdom, that we who have played the fool, by consenting to iniquity, and giving our good God an offence, may better understand ourselves in the great concernments of our souls. Make Him to us righteousness, that we may be out of danger by reason of the deserved punishment of our sin. Make Him to us sanctification, that we who have marred our spirits, and spoiled our principles by unnatural use, may inwardly be made whole, and renewed in the spirit of our minds. Make Him to us redemption, that we may be set at liberty, and delivered from the tyranny of sin and Satan, who hath many times led us captive, *Whichcote.*

WE use our God, as Us'ers do their bands ;
 We often bear Him in our hearts, our hands,
 His Paths are beaten, and His Ways are trod,
 So long as He's a profitable God :
 But the Money's paid, the profits taken,
 Our Bonds are cancell'd, and our God's forsaken.
Quarles.

THURSDAY

1. **A**LWAYS believe yourself, and hold it in your consciousness firmly and incontestably that no one in the house is more perverse, poor, blind, and unworthy, bodily and spiritually than you are. Do not *say* this to anybody, but believe it in all simplicity before God.

2. On this account respect, love, serve and help every single person, from your heart, as circumstances may require.

3. Desire and expect nothing of the kind from others, but rather that they should despise and forget you ; for what cause have you to expect anything that you know you do not deserve ?

4. In everything, let the meanest, the smallest, and the most contemptible be good enough for you.

The above is your duty, it is not necessary that you should trouble yourself about other people's duty.

5. Believe always the best of what others say and do.

6. If you perceive any want of love or crossness in another towards you, do not think hard things, but rather believe that they did not mean so ill, and that the tempter is trying thereby to entice your heart, to disturb it, and to vex it ; remove this beam from your own eye by a swift and gentle turning of your mind and thoughts either to your own inherent weakness, or to God's presence within you. *Tersteegen.*

THIRD WEEK AFTER EPIPHANY 61

FRIDAY

SINCE the life of Christ is every way most bitter to nature and the Self and the Me, therefore, in each of us, nature hath a horror of it, and thinketh it evil, and unjust, and a folly, and graspeth after such a life as shall be most comfortable and pleasant to herself, and saith, and believeth also in her blindness, that such a life is the best possible.

Theologia Germanica.

'TIS just that God should not be dear
Where Self engrosses all the thought,
And groans and murmurs make it clear
Whatever else is loved, the Lord is not.

The love of Thee flows just as much
As that of ebbing self subsides ;
Our hearts, their scantiness is such,
Bear not the conflict of two rival tides.

Both cannot govern in one soul ;
Then let self-love be dispossessed ;
The love of God deserves the whole,
And will not dwell with so despised a guest.

Mme. Guyon, translated by Cowper.

SATURDAY

NO house may stand for long on a high hill if a very mighty wind assail it ; nor again one that is built on crumbling sand, by reason of the heavy rains. So too the soul of man is undermined and moved from its place when the wind of sore hardship assaileth it, or the rain of excessive anxiety. Whoever would seek eternal happiness must flee from the perilous beauty of this earth, and build the house of his mind upon the firm rock of humility, for Christ dwelleth in the Valley of Humility, and in the memory of Wisdom.

Boethius.

HAD Israel in her want, been truly humbled,
 Israel had prayed and groan'd to Heav'n, not
 grumbled ;

But Israel wanted food : Israel's complaint

Could not be fervent, Israel being faint :

Israel gets food : Now Israel is so full,

That her Devotion and her Zeal is dull.

Lord, when art Thou in season ? When's the time

To do Thee service ? When's our Zeal in prime ?

'Tis always, either not full ripe, or wasting :

We cannot serve our God, nor full nor fasting.

Quarles.

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

AS if the storme meant him,
 Or 'cause heavens face is dim,
 His needs a cloud :

Was ever froward wind
 That could be so unkind ?
 Or wave so proud ?

The wind had need be angry, and the water black,
 That to the mighty *Neptune's* self dare threaten wrack.
 There is no storme but this
 Of your owne Cowardise

That braves you out ;
 You are the storme that mocks
 Your selves ; you are the rocks
 Of your owne doubt :

Beside this feare of danger, ther's no danger here ;
 And he that here feares danger, does deserve his feare.

Crashaw.

HIS Majesty seeks and loves courageous souls, but they must be humble in their ways, and have no confidence in themselves. I never saw one of these lag behind on the road ; and never a cowardly soul, though aided by humility, make that progress in many years which the former make in a few.

St Teresa.

MONDAY

IN the great deluge of this life, wherein we are tossed, with storms round about us ; and where there is no secure casting of anchor ; there is nowhere any safe peace ; nowhere any secure quietness, but everywhere wars and strife. Therefore doth this soul of mine, which comes all weary from travelling upon a long and laborious way, lie languishing, and torn in sunder, by those vanities which it passed by ; and it doth hunger and thirst extremely ; and I have nothing to set before it. Thou, O my God, Who art rich in all things, give food to him who is so weary ; and stitch him together who is torn. *St Augustine.*

IF souls had courage enough to resign themselves to the work of purification, without having any weak or foolish pity on themselves, what a noble, rapid and happy progress would they make ! But men have too little faith, too little courage, to leave the shore, which is something tangible and solid, and has the support of sense, and to go out upon the sea, which has the supports of faith only. *Mme. Guyon.*

TUESDAY

HUMBLED with feare, and awfull reverence,
 Before the footestool of His Majestie
 Throw thy selfe downe, with trembling innocence,
 Ne dare looke up with corruptible eye
 On the dred face of that great Deity,
 For feare, lest if He chaunce to looke on thee,
 Thou turne to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before His mercie seate,
 Close covered with the Lambes integrity
 From the just wrath of His avengefull threate
 That sits upon the righteous throne on hy ;
 His throne is built upon Eternity,
 More firme and durable than steele or brasse,
 Or the hard diamond, which them both doth passe.

His scepter is the rod of Righteousnesse,
 With which He bruiseth all His foes to dust,
 And the great Dragon strongly doth repress
 Under the rigour of His judgement just ;
 His seate is Truth, to which the faithfull trust,
 From whence proceed her beames so pure and bright
 That all above Him sheddeth glorious light. . . .

But that immortall light which there doth shine,
 Is many thousand times more bright, more cleare,
 More excellent, more glorious, more divine,
 Through which to God all mortall actions here,
 And even the thoughts of men, do plaine appeare ;
 For from th' Eternall Truth it doth proceed,
 Through heavenly vertue which her beames doe breed.

Spenser.

WEDNESDAY

FURTHER consider that this was the very great and primary end of Christ coming into a Body of flesh to transfigure, and to shew the way of immortalising of it, as He did His own after His resurrection, when He ascended into the Kingdom of His Father. Then this was also noted to me from hence that had not Christ come down into a Body, the highest Saint could have attained no higher state than Paradise : though endued with all the internal excellency from the Word of Life, as a seed incorporating with it. For their highest dimension was Adam's Paradise, beyond which region neither patriarchs nor prophets did arrive before Christ's appearing in the world. Therefore you see Christ embodying Himself in a terrestrial form brought forth many considerable advantages, if they may now be considered of by the wise hearted, so as to wait and expect the fruits of that additional Spirit, that is some degrees higher than any seraphic Flame of Light.

Jane Lead.

THURSDAY

TWO things are needful to the health of man's soul. The first is grace, the other is man's free-will according thereto, and without these two no man may do, through ought that in him is, that should help him to the health of his soul. For neither free-will without this grace stirring, nor this grace without free-will assenting and helping, nought may do that may pay God. . . .

This name Jesus is nought else to say in English but "Healer," or "Health." Now every man that lives in this wretched life is spiritually sick, for there is no man that lives without sin, which is spiritual sickness, and therefore he may never feel and come to the joys of heaven unless he first be made whole of his spiritual sickness. But this health may no man have that has use of reason, but if he desire it, and love it, and have delight therein in as much as he hopes for to get it. Now the name of Jesus is nought else but this spiritual health. Wherefore it is sooth that they say, that there may no man be safe but if he love and like in the name of Jesus, for there may no man be spiritually whole but if he love and desire spiritual health.

Richard Rolle.

FRIDAY

THIS is the Spiritual Thirst of Christ : the love-longing that lasteth, and ever shall, till we see that sight on Doomsday. For we that shall be saved and shall be Christ's joy and His bliss, some be yet here, and some be to come, and so shall some be, unto that day. Therefore this is His thirst and love-longing, to have us altogether whole in Him, to His bliss. For we be not now as fully whole in Him as we shall be then. . . . For anent that Christ is our Head, He is glorified and impassible ; and anent His Body in which all His members are knit, He is not yet fully glorified, nor all impassible. Therefore the same desire and thirst that He had upon the Cross, the same hath He yet, and shall have unto the time that the last soul that shall be saved is come up to His bliss. For as verily as there is a property in God of truth and pity, so verily there is a property in God of thirst and longing. And this property of thirst and longing cometh of the endless Goodness of God, even as the property of pity cometh of His endless Goodness. Thus He hath ruth and compassion on us, and He hath longing to have us : but His wisdom and His love suffereth not the end to come till the best time.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

SATURDAY

LET us speak now of the great benefits that accrue to us by our Saviour's being in our nature. He doth acquire the right of redeeming us ; and makes satisfaction in that nature that had transgressed : and He doth repair the ruined nature of man by dwelling in it, and by working righteousness in it. Now let us look for the explication of this in ourselves : in our *nativity from above* ; in *mental transformation*, and *deification*. Do not stumble at the use of the word. For we have authority for the use of it in scripture : *being made partakers of the divine nature* ; which is in effect our *deification*. Also let it appear in our *reconciliation to God*, to *goodness*, *righteousness* and *truth* ; in our *being created after God in righteousness and true holiness*. It was a signal evidence of a divine power in the disciples of Christ, at the first publication of the gospel, that it wrought so great an alteration in all those that did receive it. Therefore let these things take effect in us ; in our *spirituality*, and *heavenly-mindedness* ; in our *conformity to the divine nature*, and *nativity from above*.

Whichcote.

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

WE must not only *be* to God, but *show*
 To Man ; Paul's Cloak must be remembered too.
Quarles.

NOW I assert that the most precious of all this
 world's blessings is True Friendship, which must
 be accounted not a worldly good, but a heavenly
 blessing ; for it is not false Fate that produces it, but
 God, Who creates natural friends in kinsmen. For
 every other thing in this world man desireth either
 because it will help him to power, or to get some
 pleasure, save only a true friend ; him we love for
 love's sake and for our trust in him, though we can
 hope for no other return from him. *Boethius.*

BE useful where thou livest, that they may
 Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.
 Kindnesse, good parts, great places are the way
 To compasse this. Finde out men's wants and will,
 And meet them there. All worldly joys go lesse
 To the one joy of doing kindnesses.
George Herbert.

MONDAY

GOD gave us the Word, His Only-Begotten Son, without regard to His own profit. He has loved us without being loved, and we love because we are loved : He loves us of grace, and we Him of duty, because we are bound to love Him. We cannot be of any profit to God, just as we cannot love Him of grace, without duty. Yet I say that God demands of us, that as He has loved us without any second thoughts, so He should be loved by us. In what way can we do this then, since He demands it of us, and we cannot give it Him. I tell you : through a means which He has established, by which we can love Him freely, and without the least regard to any profit of ours ; that is, we can be useful, not to Him, which is impossible, but to our neighbour. Now by this means we can obey what He demands of us for the glory and praise of His Name ; to shew the love that we have for Him, we ought to serve and love every rational creature, and extend our charity to good and bad, to every kind of people, as much to one who does us ill service and criticises us as to one who serves us. For God is no respecter of persons, but of holy desires, and His charity extends over just men and sinners.

St Catherine of Siena.

TUESDAY

SO being beaten to it, by constant sense, and daily experience, that it is not by our willing or running, according to our wisdom and strength, that we can attain anything ; but by God's shewing mercy to us in Christ ; we therefore daily wait at the posts of God's heavenly wisdom, to feel the gate of mercy and tender love opened to us, and mercy and love flow in upon us, whereby we may and daily do, obtain what our hearts desire and seek after, blessed be the Lord for ever. *Isaac Penington.*

SINCE the Lord is near us, we must be careful for nothing, but with prayer, and with thanksgiving make everything known to Him. But we must guard ourselves against a certain apparent discourtesy, namely that we only want to talk to our Friend of our own affairs ; let us rather, and with greater pleasure, speak of His matters, of His Blessedness, Powers, Acts and Virtues, to rejoice and find happiness therein, for this is required of a mutual friendship, that each sympathises with the good or evil fortune of the other. *Tersteegen.*

WEDNESDAY

WHEREFORE, O Child ! giving thanks to The God, it behoves to pray to obtain the beautiful Mind. The Soul then passes on to the superior, but to the inferior it is impassible. For there is a community of Souls; and those of the Gods hold communion with those of the men, and those of the men with those of the irrationals. But the superior take care of the inferior. Gods of men, but men of the irrational animals, but The God of all. For He is Superior to all, and all are inferior to Him. The World then is subject to The God ; but the Man to the World, and the irrational to the Man ; but The God is over all things and about all things. And of The God indeed the Energies are like as rays, and of the World, the natures are rays, but of the Man the arts and sciences are rays. And these Energies indeed energize throughout the world, and upon the Man through the physical rays of the World, but the natures through the elements, but the men through the Arts and Sciences.

And this is the administration of the Universe dependent from the Nature of The One, and pervading it through the Mind of One. Than which nothing is more divine and more energetic, or more unitive of Men indeed to the Gods, or of Gods to the Men.

Hermes Trismegistus.

THURSDAY

I SAW full surely that He changeth never His purpose in no manner of thing, nor never shall, without end. For there was no thing unknown to Him in His rightful ordinance from without beginning. And therefore all-thing was set in order ere anything was made, as it should stand without end; and no manner of thing shall fail of that point. For He made all things in fulness of goodness, and therefore the blessed Trinity is ever full pleased in all His works.

And all this shewed He full blissfully, signifying thus : *See ! I am God : see ! I am in all thing : see ! I do all thing : see ! I lift never Mine hands off My works, nor ever shall, without end : see ! I lead all thing to the end I ordained it to from without beginning, by the same Might, Wisdom and Love whereby I made it. How should any thing be amiss ?*

Lady Julian of Norwich.

FRIDAY

THE same mind which only respects things that are above in the Father's Kingdom of Glory is to be in you, as it was in Jesus your Lord. For this is the sum and head to which all prophecies and revelations tend, even the finishing of this mystery, Christ the Light, Wisdom, Power and Righteousness of God : which can be brought to pass only by giving up and laying down our life, as to all sensitive properties ; which is the highest and most resolute act of the will-spirit to give its name up thus, and to subscribe your spirit, soul and body in the blood of that life that must die, that so Christ may be only alive in you. And albeit while ye are laying down with great reluctancy that life which is so agreeable to this terrestrial life, because of contempt and dishonour that it suffers hereby : As your Lord in His crucifixion went through, so by your spiritual mystical giving up your lives, though as to this world's eye in shame, rebuke, and weakness ; yet in truth and verity, it shall rise in strength, victory and power in Ghostly Majesty, whereby ye will possess the gates of your enemies. This is most wonderfully deep, if it may be fathomed by the spirit in you.

Jane Lead.

SATURDAY

BY the cross, God casteth on man chains and a bridle. And except this should be so, he would wander into error in time, and though a man sometimes may think that he shall serve God better unless this or that happens, yet God adjudgeth it otherwise, and knows this to be best, contrary to a man's own opinion.

Matthew Weyer.

ARE the desires of thy soul after Christ, whole Christ, to be righteousness, and withal sanctification to thee? Wouldst thou willingly give up thyself to be ruled by Him, and have Him thy King? Hadst thou rather choose to suffer the greatest affliction for His sake, to honour Him, than to commit the least sin and displease Him? Doth thy heart go out after Him when thou hearest Him spoke of? Dost thou account Him thy treasure, so that all the world sounds but as an empty shell to thee, when He is named? Says thy soul within thee, Oh! that He were mine? and, oh! that I were His, that I could please Him and live to Him! Then do not toss thy spirit, and jangle and spin out thy thoughts in fruitless, endless doubtings, but close with this as thy portion, and be of good comfort; thy sins are, or will be, forgiven thee.

Archbp. Leighton.

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

SO in one word our Lord's humilitie
 We turn upon Him in a sense most true,
 For what Christ once in humbleness began,
 We Him in glorie call, The Sonne of Man.
George Herbert.

THE very beginning of Christ's ministry is in the Spirit and power of God, whereby He redeems out of the spirit and power of Satan ; and to this men are to be turned, if they will witness salvation by Jesus Christ, even to the light and power of God's Holy Spirit, which breaks the darkness and strength of the kingdom of Satan in the heart. For indeed all literal professions, beliefs, knowledges and practices, out of the life and power, Satan can transform himself into, and uphold and maintain his kingdom under, in the hearts of men ; but the inward light and power of life breaks it, where the minds of people are by the Spirit of the Lord turned thereto, and subjected under its rule and government.

Isaac Penington.

MONDAY

FOR this cause, Christ was to be manifested in Flesh in Godlike power, as very needful to become that great High Priest, to atone and make expiation for the sins and defectiveness under the first Covenant, which was given in Paradise; all since having sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. The holy seed in them being weak, through the body which is included, and falling under the gross element: which hath and doth in some much more than others, choke and smother the life, and doth greatly cloud and darken universally this pure light, whereby the good part doth rarely get the victory in any, till they attain to a good degree of illumination and purification. For, this spring of light doth get through but by degrees: for though in itself it is of great potency, yet need enough there is, for sins committed in the times of ignorance and minority, before the spirit comes, to make the soul understand itself, from whence it is relapsed: I say, for the remission of these sins past through the forbearance of God; not less than such a sacrifice was your Lord Jesus for you to become.

Jane Lead.

TUESDAY

BE not hasty, but wait long, believe long, hope long, feel the patience of the Lamb, learn the mysterious path of life from the inward teacher, that ye may certainly know it, and find your feet guided by His Spirit into it.

Isaac Penington.

SUBMIT thyself to sufferings, that thou mayest with a ready mind bear whatsoever is grievous, burdensome, and tedious : and endure, even to the end, and in this daily cross possess thy soul with patience. Let not length of time be irksome to thee ; offer up to the Lord thy carnal mind perpetually, that Christ alone may be in thee, thy will, life and sole governor. The Lord have compassion on us all.

Matthew Weyer.

NEVER wilt Thou have perfect resignation if thou mindest human respects, and reflectest upon the little idol of what people say. The soul that goes by the inward way will soon lose itself if once it come to look at reason amongst the creatures, and in commerce and conversation with them. There is no other reason than not to look at reason, but to imagine that God permits grievances to fall on us, to humble and annihilate us, and make us live wholly resigned.

Molinos.

WEDNESDAY

THE sorrow or sadness of this world springs from three sources. 1. From the great Enemy of souls, who confuses the understanding, enfeebles the will, and dismays the soul by a host of woeful dreary suggestions. He troubles and clouds the soul by a swarm of vexing thoughts, and then seizes his prey, overwhelming it with mistrust, envy, dislikes, jealousy, memories of past sin and the like, and prompting it to reject all reasonable consolations. 2. Again, sadness sometimes arises from natural temperament ; and this is not necessarily wrong in itself, yet the Enemy uses it largely to tempt and harm the soul. The Evil One is never so prone to spread his toils around bright, cheerful minds as around those who are gloomy and depressed, for they are much more easily influenced by vexations, suspicions, hatred, murmurs, envy, and spiritual sloth. 3. There is a sadness inevitable to the vicissitudes of life. Such sorrow is common to good and bad men alike, but in the good it is relieved by resignation to God's Will. The sorrow of true penitence is less sadness than regret for and abhorrence of evil. *St Francis de Sales.*

THURSDAY

AS soon as the Soul's Fire began and imagined according to the Earthliness : and would eat of the four Elements and Stars, then the outward Kingdom, *viz* : the Third Principle, drew in the first Principle, into the Soul's Fire, and also into the Heavenly Body, and obscured the Noble Image so that it fell into inability, into Sleep ; Then it was in inability, as it were captivated in Death, for the Earthly Source or Quality, dwelt now therein whence the Soul's Fire became fierce, wrathful, stinging and murderous, for it must now eat Evil and Good, and the Noble Image of the Similitude of God disappeared. *Jacob Behmen.*

O LORD our God, under the shadow of Thy wings be our hope. For when Thou art our strength, our strength is strength indeed ; when it is our own, it is but weakness. Our good ever lives in Thee ; when we turn aside, we turn to evil. For Thou Thyself art our good ; and therefore doth it live in Thee, and never faileth. Nor need we fear lest there be no home for us to return to. We fell from it ; but our home, Thy eternity, has not fallen while we are away. *St Augustine.*

FRIDAY

OBERVE these things ; beware of sin, and *ye shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord.* It is true, this love of God changes not, nor hangs on thy carriage, nor any thing without itself ; yea, all our good hangs on it : but know, as to the knowledge and apprehension of it, it depends much on the holy frame of thy heart, and exact regulation of thy ways. Sin obstructs and darkens all : these are the clouds and mists : and where any believer is adventurous on the ways of sin, he shall smart for it. Where sin is, there will be a storm, as Chrysostom's word is of Joshua. The experience of all witnesseth this : no strength of faith will keep out floods of doubting and troublous thoughts, where any novel sin hath opened a gap for them to rush in by.

Archbp. Leighton.

IT concerns all people seriously to consider, whether the reason why they have not power, be not because they do not receive Christ, who hath all power in heaven and earth given to Him. For many talk of Christ, but few come to Him in the Father's drawings, so will not receive Him ; like the Jews who waited for His appearance, and yet rejected Him when He came.

Isaac Penington.

SATURDAY

THE joy and pleasure which His soul doth take
 In all His works is for His creature's sake.
 Yet doth He take delight
 That's altogether infinite
 In them even as they from Him come,
 For such His love and goodness is, the sum
 Of all His happiness doth seem,
 At least in His esteem,
 In that delight and joy to lie
 Which is His blessed creatures' melody.

In them He sees, and feels, and smells, and lives,
 In them affected is to whom He gives ;
 In them ten thousand ways,
 He all His work again enjoys.
 All things from Him to Him proceed
 By them ; are His in them : as if indeed
 His Godhead did itself exceed.
 To them He all conveys ;
 Nay, even Himself ! He is the End
 To whom in them Himself, and all things tend.
Traherne.

Septuagesima

THE birth of the world was preceded by a condition of things suitable for the exercise of supernatural powers, outstripping the limits of time, eternal and infinite. The Creator and Demiurge of the universe perfected His works in it, spiritual light for the happiness of all who love the Lord, intellectual and invisible natures, all the orderly arrangement of pure intelligences who are beyond the reach of our mind and of whom we cannot even discover the names. They fill the essence of this invisible world, as Paul teaches us. To this world at last it was necessary to add a new world, both a school and training place where the souls of men should be taught, and a home for beings destined to be born and to die. Thus the writer who wisely tells us of the birth of the Universe does not fail to put these words at the head of the narrative, 'In the beginning God created : ' that is to say, in the beginning of time. Therefore if he makes the world appear in the beginning, it is not a proof that its birth has preceded that of all other things that were made. He only wishes to tell us that after the invisible and intellectual world, the visible world, the world of the senses, began to exist.

St Basil.

MONDAY

MAN, though at present not so capable of the Divine Imploy of Praise and Thanksgiving as some of the other Intellectual Orders, yet has as much, perhaps more Obligation to it than any of them all ; since God has not only favoured him with peculiar benefits, such as the Grace of Repentance, the Honour of being Personally united to the Divinity, etc. but has also placed him in such a Sphere where he is the only Creature that can acknowledge and pay Religious Service to the common Creator. All other Creatures praise God only passively, as far as they carry in them the Characters of the Divine Perfections, which must be considered and acknowledged before they redound to the actual glory of the Creator. But Man is the only Creature here below that can *actively* Praise and Honour his great Maker and Benefactor. Man therefore is concerned to Honour and Glorifie God both for himself and for all the Creatures round about him ; and as the whole World is the Temple of the great God, so Man is as it were the Priest in this Region of it, where he must undertake the Office of Honouring and Glorifying God, not only in his own, but also in the name of all this brute and incapable part of the Creation.

John Norris.

TUESDAY

TO heighten thy Devotions, and keep low
 All mutinous thoughts, what busines e'r thou
 hast,
 Observe God in his works ; here fountains flow,
 Birds sing, Beasts feed, Fish leap, and th' Earth
 stands fast ;
 Above are restles motions, running Lights,
 Vast circling Azure, giddy Clouds, days, nights.

When Seasons change, then lay before thine Eyes
 His wondrous Method ; mark the various Scenes
 In heav'n ; Hail, Thunder, Rainbows, Snow, and
 Ice,
 Calmes, Tempests, Light, and Darkness by his means ;
 Thou canst not miss his Praise ; Each tree, herb,
 flowre
 Are shadows of his Wisedome, and his Pow'r.

Henry Vaughan.

GOD is above Man ; the brute Creatures under
 him : he set in the midst : Lest he should be
 proud that he hath infinite Creatures under him,
 that One is infinite Degrees above him. I do
 therefore owe awe unto God, mercy to the inferior
 Creatures ; knowing that they are my Fellowes, in
 respect of Creation : whereas there is no proportion
 betwixt me and my Maker.

Bishop Hall.

WEDNESDAY

HAD not the Birth of the Holy Ghost arisen in us at our Creation, we could no more be unholy for want of it, than the Beasts are, nor any more *now* have wanted to be renewed by it, than the Beasts that never had it. But since there is now no Sanctification or Redemption for us, but by having the Holy Ghost as a free Gift of God breathed again into us, it is no less than a Demonstration, that we had before we fell, this Holiness by the Nature which God gave us at first ; and that the Holiness of our Creation consisted in this, that the Holy Spirit then proceeded, or arose forth in our Soul, as the Birth of the Son of God did ; and that it might for the same Reason be then called the Holiness of our Nature, as it is now after the Fall, called a Holiness by Gift or Grace. For if we are now to be born again of the Spirit by Grace, does not this tell us, that we had this Birth of the Spirit in us at the first, and that then it was the Birth of our Nature by Creation ?

William Law.

THURSDAY

THESE ordinances [of creation] God suffereth to stand as long as He willeth, but whenever He shall loose the bridle-rein wherewith He hath bridled His creatures (that is, the law of contraries) and let them fall asunder, they shall leave their present harmony, and, striving together each according to his own will, abandon their fellowship, and destroy all this world, and themselves be brought to nought. The same God uniteth people in friendship, and assembleth them in marriages of pure affection ; He bringeth together friends and comrades so that they loyally observe concord and fellowship. Oh, how blessed were mankind if their minds were as straight and as firmly based and ordered as the rest of creation is ! *Boethius.*

BUT seeks he your Obedience, Order, Light,
Your calm and wel-train'd flight,
Where, though the glory differ in each star,
Yet is there peace still, and no war.

Henry Vaughan.

FRIDAY

O KNOWING, glorious Spirit ! when
Thou shalt restore trees, beasts and men,
When thou shalt make all new again,
Destroying onely death and pain,
Give him amongst thy works a place,
Who in them lov'd and sought thy face !
Henry Vaughan.

IF I was a nightingale, I would act the part of a
nightingale : if a swan, the part of a swan. But
since I am a reasonable creature, it is my duty to
praise God. *Epictetus.*

THUS God framed this great Organ of the World :
He tuned it, yet not so that it could play upon
itself, or make any musick by virtue of this general
composure, but that it might be fitted and prepared
for the finger of God Himself, and at the presence of
His powerful touch might sound forth the praise of
its Creatour in a most sweet and harmonious manner.
Culverwel.

SATURDAY

WHAT a thicke mist, yea what a palpable and more than Egyptian darknesse, doth the naturall man live in ! what a world is there, that he doth not see at all ! and how little doth he see in this, which is his proper element ! There is no bodily thing but the brute creatures see as well as he, and some of them better. As for his eye of reason, how dim is it in those things which are best fitted to it ! what one thing is there in nature which he doth perfectly know ? what herb, or flower, or worme that he treads on, is there whose true essence he knoweth ? No, not so much as what is in his owne bosom ; what it is, where it is, or whence it is that gives Being to himselfe : but for those things which concerne the best World, he doth not so much as confusedly see them ; neither knoweth whether they be. He sees no whit into the great and awfull Majesty of God. He discerns Him not in all His creatures, filling the world with His infinite and glorious Presence. He sees not His wise Providence, over-ruling all things, disposing all casuall events, ordering all sinfull actions of men to His owne glory. He comprehends nothing of the beauty, majesty, power and mercy of the Saviour of the World, sitting in His humanity at His Father's right hand. It was not without cause that we call a meere fool a naturall.

Bishop Hall.

Sexagesima

A SOWER went forth to sow. The first bad ground is a highway. The common road of all passengers, of all kind of foolish, brutish thoughts, seeking nothing but how to live, and yet know not to what end, have no design; trivial, highway hearts, all temptations pass at their pleasure, profane as Esau, which some critics draw from a word signifying the threshold, the outer step, that every foul foot treads on. The second is stony ground:—present, mushroom Christians, soon ripe, soon rotten: the seed grows never deep. Oh, rocky hearts! How shallow, shallow are the impressions of divine things upon you! Religion goes never farther than the upper surface of your hearts; few deep thoughts of God, and of Jesus Christ, and the things of the world to come; all are but slight and transient glances. The third is thorny ground. Many are almost in heaven, so much desire of renovation, and some endeavours after it, and yet the thorns prevail. Miserable thorns! The base things of a perishing life drawing away the strength of affection, sucking the sap of the soul. “The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.”

Archbp. Leighton.

MONDAY

ALL then that ever were or shall be descended from Adam, have Jesus Christ for their Saviour, as Adam had, they receive the Promise made to him, and receive by that Promise that which he received by it, they have a Seed of the Woman, an incorruptible Seed of Life, springing up in the first Essences of their Life, which is to oppose and resist the Seed of the Serpent, or the diabolical Nature that is in them also. And therefore no Son of Adam is without a Saviour, or can be lost, or entirely overcome by the Evil that the Fall has brought upon him, but by his own turning away from this Saviour within him, and giving himself up to the Suggestions and Workings of the evil Nature that is in him. *William Law.*

O LIFE of all lives, Thou slayest none that put their trust in Thee, and seek Thy friendship ; yea rather, Thou sustainest their bodily life in greater vigour, and makest their soul to live. *St Teresa.*

OUR souls are connected and intimately joined to God, as being indeed members and distinct portions of his essence ; and must not he be sensible of every movement of them as belonging and con-natural to himself ? *Epictetus.*

TUESDAY

I AM ready to conclude it the most prodigious thing in nature that so very few should be in love with the beauty of Holiness, were I not immediately surprised with a greater Miracle, which is, that many of those few after some considerable progress in virtue, retract their best choice, and after the good Angel has brought them within sight of the Mountain of Safety, look back upon the Region of wickedness.

John Norris.

GOD crowneth no divided heart ;
To Him, oh hallow all thy life !
Who loveth Jesus but in part
He works himself much pain and strife,
And gains what he deserveth well,
Here conflict, and hereafter hell.

Press on !

Who wrestling long, with many a cry
Can bid farewell at last to all,
Yet ever loves the Lord most High,
Loves Him alone whate'er befall,
Is counted worthy of the crown,
And on a kingly throne set down.

Press on !

Lyra Germanica.

WEDNESDAY

HERE now is understood the Devils', and also Man's fall, for according to the Eternal Nature, they are both out of one Original ; the Devil was an Angel, and should have set his Imagination in the Light of God, *viz.* in Love and Meekness, in the Divine Substantiality : and then he had conceived divine Substantiality in his Imagination, and his light had continued shining ; his magic fire-source or quality, had eaten of God's Meekness, and then also, had the fire-source or quality burned in such an Essence and property, and then he had continued an Angel. But he set his Imagination to go after the forms to Nature, and would needs rule terribly in the might of the Fire ; he contemned the Meekness, *viz.* the Second Principle, and would domineer over God. What he now desired, that he received also into his fiery Desire ; *viz.* the Substantiality of the fierce wrath, out of the forms of the Dark world : Thus now is that Substantiality the food of his Spirit's Fire, and [he] can conceive no desire more in the Meekness, *viz.* in God's substance. Thus he is a Devil, and dwelleth in the Centre of the Darkness ; for his Light is extinguished, he cannot kindle that again, it shineth no more out from his Essence, neither can his Imagination any more attain it, and he continueth in the Darkness, and eateth of the dark Substantiality.

Jacob Behmen

THURSDAY

WHEN the Scripture saith : "He hardeneth their hearts that they believe not, and so come not to be saved," then it speaketh of those who would be saved by their own ability, in their evil will and life ! those He suffereth to go on in their purpose or predestination, for they will do it. As also Adam did, he would not be resigned into God as a child, but be his own, and apprehend and know good and evil, for he went out from God's will into his own of set purpose, therefore God left him, and there he fell down and slept.

Jacob Behmen.

IF our Redemption proposed to restore to us a Divine Sight, would not this be a sufficient Proof that by the Fall, we had lost some Divine Manner of seeing ? So, if God Himself takes our Nature upon Him to redeem it, and it be declared that nothing, but this uniting the Divine Nature to the human, can be our Redemption, can we want a Proof that the Divine Nature existed in some manner in us before the Fall ?

William Law.

FRIDAY

THERE is a congruity in the thing itself, and God hath so ordered it, that vexation and anguish still attend sin, and the ways of holiness be ways of peace. Say men what they will, great falls leave wounds and smart behind them, and they must be washed with sharper liquor before balm and oil be poured into them. And not only will more notorious breaches disturb thy peace, but a tract of careless and fruitless walking. If thou abate of thy attendance on God, and thy fear cool towards Him, lagging and falling downwards to something you are caring for and taken with, you shall find an estrangement, it may be insensible at first and for a while, because of thy sloth, that thou dost not observe diligently how it is with thee ; but, after a time, it shall be more easily known, and more hardly mended : and there is none of us but might find much more of God in this our way homeward, if the foolishness and wanderings of our hearts did not prevent us.

Archbp. Leighton.

HUMILITY which does not produce generosity is unquestionably false.

St F. de Sales.

SATURDAY

BY Perseverance, I do not understand a continuedly uniform, equal course of obedience, and such as is not interrupted with the least act of sin (for this is a perfection not to be hoped for, under the disadvantages of mortality) but only such a constancy of obedience as excludes all contrary Habits, and likewise all such acts of sin as are said directly to waste the Conscience, those which are committed against the clear and express Dictate either of natural Reason, or supernatural Revelation. And withal, such an Obedience as is attended with a sedulous care and hearty endeavour to correct and subdue even those pitiable infirmities, which can never be wholly put off in this state, but will always adhere like spots to the brightest Star in the Firmament. This I conceive to be all one with that disposition of Soul which with more compendiousness we usually call sincerity, in opposition to a perfect and sinless obedience.

John Norris.

CHOICE alone is vice ; choice alone is virtue.

Epictetus.

Quinquagesima

LOVE is the very *esse* of life with every one, and from love both angels and men have life. The life of every one is such as his love.

Swedenborg.

LOVE is like fire, the flame of which is brighter according as it is fed with a purer material, and which is more speedily extinguished by heaping earth upon it than in any other way.

St Francis de Sales.

THERE are only two duties which our Lord requires of us, viz : the love of God, and the love of our neighbour : and the *surest* sign for discovering whether we observe these two duties, is the love of our neighbour. And be assured that the further you advance in that love, the more will you advance in the love of God likewise ; for the affection which His Majesty has for us is so great, that as a return for the love we shew our neighbour, He will make that love go on *increasing* which we have for Himself.

St Teresa.

MONDAY

SEEK Him Who seeketh thee ; love thy Lover, by Whom thou art beloved ; by Whose love thou art prevented, for His love is the cause of thine. Be thou careful together with Him, Who is so careful of thee ; be attentive to Him, Who is attentive to thee : be pure with Him Who is pure ; be holy with Him Who is holy. God Who is so sweet, so meek, and so full of mercy, doth require that thou shouldst be sweet, and meek, and gentle, and humble, and full of mercy. Love Him Who hath drawn thee out of the lake of misery, and the filth of sin. *St Augustine.*

THE most holy man is the most loving, it is he who looks most often towards God, and who satisfies the most amply the needs of his looking.
Ruysbroek.

EVERY man's ruling affection or love remains with him after death, nor is it extirpated to eternity, for the spirit of man is altogether such as his love is.
Swedenborg.

TUESDAY

LOVE draws us above reason, it draws us by paths
and by-ways that it alone knows, and it draws
us without return. *Ruysbroek.*

BECAUSE I know Thee little, O Lord, I love
Thee little ; and because I love Thee little, I
rejoice little in Thee. For I am in exterior things,
Thou in the interior : I am in temporal things, Thou
in spiritual : my mind is scattered and spilt, my
thought is entertained, my speech is employed upon
transitory objects : but Thou, O Lord, art eternity
itself. Thou lovest high, and I low things, Thou
celestial, I terrestrial : and when shall these con-
trarieties be ever able to meet ? *St Augustine.*

LOVE and death. Death to all love save that of
Jesus, in order to live for ever to Him through
His Eternal Love. May these words, spoken in and
through love to your love, find a resting-place in your
heart, so that love may bring forth the fruit of good
works, not of mere empty words.

St Francis de Sales.

Ash Wednesday

OH ! how often does man give himself up in will to God, and take himself back again as quickly, and fall away from God ! But now begin again, and give thyself to Him afresh : yield thyself captive to the Divine Will in rightful allegiance, and trust thyself to the power of thy Father. Trust Him wholly, and seek His righteousness. For therein is His righteousness shewn, that He abideth ever with those who heartily seek Him, and make Him their end, and give themselves up to Him. In such He reigns, and all vain care falls away of itself in those who thus keep close to God in true self-surrender. *Tauler.*

THERE is no Wrath that stands between God and us, but what is awakened in the dark Fire of our own fallen Nature ; and to quench this Wrath, and not His own, God gave His only-begotten Son to be made Man. God has no more Wrath in Himself now than He had before the Creation, when He had only Himself to love. The precious Blood of His Son was not poured out to pacify Himself, but it was poured out to quench the Wrath and Fire of the fallen Soul, and kindle in it a Birth of Light and Love. *William Law.*

THURSDAY

THOSE faults, which we find the most bitterly unbearable, will turn to good if we use them to humiliate ourselves, without slackening in our earnestness to correct them. Discouragement brings no remedy, it is only the despair of annoyed self-love. The true means of profiting by the humiliation of our faults, is to see them in all their hideousness, without losing hope in God, and without ever hoping anything of ourselves.

Fénelon.

GOD Himself was not *angry* at all, at a small Act of eating a Fruit, and so in Anger turned Man out of Paradise, into a World cursed for that Sin. But Man freely and voluntarily chose, against the Will, and Command of God, to be in the World in its cursed State, unblessed by Paradise : For he chose to enter into a Sensibility and Feeling of its Good and Evil, which is directly choosing to be where Paradise is not ; for nothing that is in Paradise can be touched or hurt by anything of the outward World. Therefore the first State of Man was a state of such Glory and heavenly Prerogatives, as I have above related ; and his Fall was a Fall into, or under the Power of this outward World.

William Law.

FRIDAY

THEY asked me, "How could evil exist, when nothing but good had existed from creation? In order that anything may come into existence, it must have an origin. Good could not be the origin of evil, because evil is nothing of good, for it is deprivative and destructive of good; yet, since it exists and is felt, it is not nothing, but something: tell us therefore whence this something came into existence after nothing." To this I replied, "This arcanum cannot be opened unless it be known that no one is good but God alone, and that there is not any thing good which is good in itself, but from God; wherefore he who looks to God, and is willing to be led by God, is in good; but he who turns away from God, and wants to be led by himself, is not in good; for the good which he does is either for the sake of self or for the sake of the world: from which considerations it is evident that man himself is the origin of evil; not that that origin was implanted in man from creation; but that he, by turning from God to himself, implanted it in himself. That origin of evil was not in Adam and his wife, but because they turned away from God, and turned to themselves as to a god, they made in themselves the origin of evil. Eating of the tree [of knowledge] signified believing that they knew good and evil, and were wise from themselves, and not from God."

Swedenborg.

SATURDAY

KNOW that thou, be thou never so great a wretch ;
 hast thou done never so grievous sin ; forsake
 thyself and all thy works good and ill, cry mercy, and
 ask only salvation by the virtue of His precious
 Passion meekly and tristely, and without doubt thou
 shalt have it, and from original sin and all other,
 thou shalt be safe. *Richard Rolle.*

MY God, Accept of my Confession !

It was last day,
 Touch'd with the guilt of my own way,
 I sate alone, and taking up
 The bitter Cup,
 Through all thy fair and various store,
 Sought out what might outvie my score.

The blades of grasse thy Creatures feeding ;
 The trees, their leafs ; the flowres, their seeding ;
 The Dust, of which I am a part ;
 The Stones, much softer than my heart ;
 The drops of rain, the sighs of wind,
 The Stars, to which I am stark blind ;
 The Dew thy herbs drink up by night,
 The beams they warm them at i' th' light ;
 All that have signature or life
 I summon'd to decide this strife ;
 And lest I should lack for 'Arrears,
 A spring ran by, I told her tears ;
 But when these came unto the scale,
 My sins alone outweigh'd them all.

Henry Vaughan.

First Sunday in Lent

SIN is an evil so exceedingly horrible, that even in seeking any good whatsoever, or avoiding any ill whatsoever, no sin, either mortal or venial, should be committed. Now we all have committed a great number of sins. Tell me how we manage to contain ourselves, and to prevent ourselves from melting with love, and swooning with adoration, when we plunge into the depths of Mercy, and the eyes of our soul are fixed on this fact : God has taken away our sins. He has faithfully returned love to His enemies. How is it that we do not melt ? Compared with forgiveness, the creation of the world out of nothing is truly but a very little thing. But that is not all. The Lord, in His graciousness, has willed to turn our sins against themselves, and in our favour, He has found the way to make them useful to us, to convert them, in our hands, into instruments of salvation. Let not this consideration diminish in any degree whatever our terror of sinning, nor our sorrow for having sinned. But our sins have led us to repentance ; and even they have become for us, sources of humility and of love. *Ruysbroek.*

MONDAY

OH ! how dangerous is sin committed deliberately, for it is hard for a man to repent of it, and so long as he does not repent, the guilt exists ;—it lasts as long as the man remains with his will towards the sin committed, or towards committing it.

St Catherine of Genoa.

SATAN seems to take advantage of the virtues we may have, for the purpose of giving a sanction, so far as he can, to the evil he aims at. *St Teresa.*

OH ! my beloved Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech Thee to have compassion upon poor sinners, and to forgive them their sins and misdoings ; and especially upon those who, after having done good works, have lost the same again by reason of sin ; and grant them, dear Lord, the crumbs that fall from the rich table of Thy grace ; and of Thy goodness turn them from their sins through the pains of purification, and impart unto them the overflowings of Thy grace, that through Thy merits they may be kept unto the end.

Tauler.

TUESDAY

IF an inspired undertaking fail through fault of those to whom it is entrusted, can we still say that it is God's Will, in which we must acquiesce? Surely it then becomes our fault, not His Will, which is the hindering cause? Truly, thy fault is not God's Will, He is not the Author of sin; but it is His Will that thy fault be visited with failure, for while His Goodness cannot will thy fault, His Justice must needs will its penalty. God did not cause David to sin, but He inflicted the punishment that sin incurred; He did not will Saul's sin, but He willed that defeat should follow on that sin. Whensoever, then, God's designs fail by reason of our fault, it is our part alike to abhor our sin in true repentance and to accept the penalty, ever remembering that while the sin is contrary to God's Will, so the penalty is in conformity to that Will.

St Francis de Sales.

EVERY transgression leaves a blot. For even remission of sins is expressed by blotting out of iniquity. Although the blot was here greater before 'twas blotted out; for blotting out of iniquities is the wiping out of a blot. Besides the guilt of sin, and the power of sin, there's the *Macula peccati* too; the *stain of sin*.

Culverwel.

WEDNESDAY

THE vine that is not pruned grows to wood. So also man. The Word—the knife—clears away the waste shoots, compelling the impulses of the soul to fructify. And Plato says beautifully: “For all who suffer punishment are in reality treated well, for they are benefited; since the spirit of those who are justly punished is improved.” And if those who are corrected receive good at the hands of justice, and according to Plato, what is just is acknowledged to be good, fear itself does good and has been found to be for our good. “For the soul that feareth the Lord shall live, for their praise is in Him who saveth them.”

Clement of Alexandria.

YOU may think perhaps, that those souls to whom our Lord so especially communicates Himself will, on that account be so secure of their enjoying Him for ever, as never to fear or bewail their former sins. But this is a great mistake, since the sorrow for sin increases still *more*, as more is received from God.

St Teresa.

THURSDAY

THIS would appear to be the art of conversion, in what manner a man shall, with greatest ease and advantage, be turned. Not the implanting in him of the power of seeing, but the considering him as possessed of it, and only improperly situated, and not looking at what he ought, and the contrivance of some method by which this may be accomplished.

Plato.

THE Fountain of eternal Life, of which Christ speaketh, is the Renovation of the Mind or Will of the Soul. Therefore I say that all Fictions and Devices to come to God by, let them have what Name soever they will, which Men contrive and invent for Ways to God, are but lost Labour and vain Endeavours, without a new Mind. There is no other Way to God but a new Mind, which turneth from Wickedness and entereth into Repentance for the Sins it hath committed. Which goeth forth from its Iniquity, and Willeth it no more ; but wrappeth its Will up in the Death of Christ, and with all Earnestness dieth from the Sin of the Soul in the Death of Christ, so that it Willeth Sin no more.

Jacob Behmen.

FRIDAY

THERE are those who leave the roots of vice and evil dispositions alive in the heart, and hew and lop at poor nature. Nature is in itself good and noble, why shouldst thou hew away aught that belongs to it. For I tell thee that when the time is come for it to yield fruit in a godly, blessed, devout life, then it will be seen that thou hast spoiled thy nature. *Tauler.*

A MAN cannot be said to return from his wickedness, unless he doth conceive displeasure at it, and resolve never to have to do with it again. Thus when a man leaves sin, with displacency and abhorrence, he may be said to turn away from it, otherwise it is but forbearance for a while, upon some reason, and as a matter of prudence. *Whichcote.*

MAN cannot be reformed unless he has freedom, because he is born into evils of every kind, which must be removed before he can be saved ; but they cannot be removed, unless he sees them in himself, and acknowledges them, and afterwards ceases to will them, and at length holds them in aversion. *Swedenborg.*

SATURDAY

SO God's Holy Spirit kindling a sense of sin against God's Mercy, which our will receives, penitence grows until that will so earnestly craves to return to God that a flame breaks out even before love is moulded, and thus the end of penitence is merged in the beginning of love, like Esau's foot in Jacob's hand, the birth of one bound up with the birth of the other. Thus the beginning of perfect love does not merely follow upon the end penitence, but they are entirely commingled, and therefrom penitence and contrition acquire life eternal.

St Francis de Sales.

O FATHER, Thy children are all disfigured, and no longer resemble Thee ! They are irritated, they are discouraged when told they should belong to Thee as Thou dost to Thyself. Reversing this righteous order, they foolishly desire to raise themselves into divinities : they desire to belong to themselves, to do all for themselves ; or at least, only to give themselves to Thee with reserve, on certain conditions, and for their own interest. *Fénelon.*

A THOUSAND offences which a man truly acknowledges and confesses himself to be guilty of, are not so perilous and so mischievous as a single offence which he will not recognise, nor allow himself to be convinced of. *Tauler.*

Second Sunday in Lent

THE SOUL. When your appetites, O Body and Self Love, are satisfied, I remain famished : and when I long to return to my own country to feed upon what is fit for me, I no longer find myself in correspondence with it, because I forsook my first road, which was pure, straight, clean, and fit for all spiritual activities. I forsook it in consenting to the demands of the Body, under pretext of its necessities ; —before long I found myself wrapped in sin, captive in its bonds I lost grace, and now,—miserable that I am,—I feel in such a condition that I cannot stir except earthwards. I let myself be dragged by you, O Body and Self-Love, every where that you may choose ; you have brought me to such a point that I oppose none of your appetites. By insensible degrees you have converted—or rather perverted me so that I feed upon your food, and I wish all that you desire : nothing good is left to me except inward remorse, through which I get little rest. And still I seek to forget myself as best I can, with these earthly things that I feed upon ; I wander among them, and lose my time, they bring me daily into more subjection ; and the more I separate myself from God, the more disquieted I am at having forsaken my true good which is God Himself.

St Catherine of Genoa.

MONDAY

I CAN, or may, or shall do nothing of myself, but just simply yield to God, so that He alone may do all things in me and work, and I may suffer Him, and all His work and His divine will. And because I will not do so, but I count myself to be my own, and say "I," "Mine," "Me" and the like, God is hindered, so that He cannot do His work in me alone and without hindrance : for this cause my fall and my going astray remain unhealed. Behold ! this all cometh of my claiming somewhat for my own.

Theologia Germanica.

THE act of praise and thanksgiving generates a twofold sorrow. The first comes from the deep feeling of our powerlessness. We feel our powerlessness ; and our inadequacy, in view of the devotion which worship exacts, enters into our soul. The second is induced by the glance we cast on the smallness of our love, the smallness of our perfection, the smallness of our growth. And this glance shews us to ourselves incapable of praise, unworthy to offer thanksgiving, too little to serve God. *Ruysbroek.*

TUESDAY

EX'TIRPATE your own evils. Expel fear, desire, envy, malevolence, avarice, effeminacy, intemperance from your mind. But these can be no otherwise expelled than by looking up to God alone as your pattern ; by attaching yourself to Him alone, and being consecrated to His commands. If you wish for anything else, you will, with sighs and groans, follow what is stronger than you, always seeking prosperity without, and never able to find it. For you seek it where it is not, and neglect to seek it where it is.

Epictetus.

IF you fall into any faults, or perceive your strength weakened or dissipated, do not lose your courage, nor suffer yourself to sink under temptations, but rather turn humbly towards our Lord, acknowledge before Him your misery and His mercy, do on your part, whatsoever shall be in your power to return to your first state, and follow courageously what you had begun.

St Luis of Granada.

WEDNESDAY

EVEN as a drunken man knoweth that he should go to his home and his rest, but cannot find the way thither, so it is with the mind when it is weighed down with the cares of this world, for drugged and led astray therewith it cannot find the direct road to what is good.

Boethius.

WHEN God of free Grace, provided that falling Man should fall into a State of Redemption, that is, into a Possibility of being God's Creature again : this was effected by God's treasuring up, or preserving in him a Seed of the Woman, a remaining Spark of his first Divine Life ; which first Divine Life was then Christ in him, his full Birth of Glory as certainly as Christ in us is now our Hope of Glory.

William Law.

THE Fall consisted in man's refusing to be God's image—*i.e.* refusing to yield himself to God's Spirit to act in him ; and thus man thought that he was to escape being an image, and that he was to be a god himself, shewing forth himself.

Erskine of Linlathen.

116 WEEK OF 2ND SUNDAY IN LENT

THURSDAY

NOT one creature is there that doth not wish to reach the place wherefrom it started, where it findeth rest, and naught to trouble. Now that rest is in God, nay, it is God. But each creature turneth round on itself, as a wheel doth, and turneth in such a way as to come back to its starting point, and to be once more that which it before was, as soon as it hath returned to where it was, and to do again what it did before.

Boethius.

WHEN, through weakness of purpose or want of faith, we become, as it were, *uncentred*, it is of immediate importance to turn again gently and sweetly inward; and thus bring the soul into harmony with the desires and purposes of God.

Mme. Guyon.

IN time of strong temptation, desertion and desolation it is necessary for thee to get close into thy centre, that thou mayest only look at and contemplate God, who keeps His Throne and His abode in the bottom of thy soul.

Molinos.

FRIDAY

THE Fall of Man brought forth the Kingdom of this World ; Sin in all Shapes is nothing else but the Will of Man driving on in a state of Self-Motion and Self Government, following the Workings of a Nature broken off from its Dependency upon, and Union with the Divine Will. All the Evil and Misery in the Creation arises only and solely from this one Cause. There is not the smallest Degree of Distraction, Pain, or Punishment, either within us, or without us, but what is owing to this, viz : that Man stands out of his Place, is not in, and under, and united to God as he should be, as the Nature of things requires.

William Law.

I BELIEVE the devil tries to make us think we have humility, and at the same time (if he can) to make us distrust God. When you find yourselves in this state avoid, as much as you can, thinking on your own misery, and meditate on the mercy of God, and how much He loves you, and how much He suffered for you.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

IS it not a pitiful thing that a religious man should spend his whole industry, and sole effort, and have his thoughts turned day and night upon his own little doings, and should be so full of them, that he can hardly properly hold converse with God, or his own heart ? *Tauler.*

PENITENCE, speaking generally, is that repentance by which we reject and abhor sin committed, resolving to repair as far as possible all injury towards him we have offended. I include reparation in my definition, because there is no real abhorrence of sin where its offence is voluntarily left unatoned.

St Francis de Sales.

LET God be served in all things—His yoke is sweet ; and it is of great importance that the soul should not be dragged, as they say, but carried gently, that it may make greater progress.

St Teresa.

THOSE who weep are those who know.

Ruysbroek.

Third Sunday in Lent

THE gracious and merciful God whom we adore and worship, in whom we have our confidence, His goodness is so great, that He will indulge to us human infirmities, and bear with us in our mistakes ; but He is severe and impartial concerning our honest meaning and true intention : *He that doth not truly mean and intend, is nothing at all in religion.* It is indispensably necessary that we be sincere, and honestly mean, and truly intend : but in this state we are short, and in some particulars fail : in some things we are ignorant, incogitant, and sometimes are surprised. But in respect of sincerity, honest-heartedness, and good intention, there is no allowance, not the least dispensation for a failure in those particulars.

Whichcote.

I KNOW not which of the two is worst, whether the case of a man who sins knowingly, or of one, who, after having repented of his sins transgresses again. For one who does again that of which he has repented, and condemning what he does, performs it willingly. The frequent asking of forgiveness then for those things in which we often transgress, is the semblance of repentance, not repentance itself.

Clement of Alexandria.

MONDAY

IF you want to test your spiritual strength by foreseeing trials and struggles, it is all very well so long as you do not imagine yourself really the better for your imaginary valour. So when you boldly foresee future possible trials, if you feel brave and steadfast, thank God, for it is a good feeling : but abide humbly between confidence and mistrust, hoping that with His Help you will be able to do all you think, but fearing lest in your wonted weakness you should fail in courage, and do nothing. Or should mistrust grow so strong that you feel you would be powerless, and are tempted to despair by such imaginary trials, then quiet yourself with a steadfast resolution to be faithful in whatever comes first, and hope that should the trial you foresee with so much fear ever occur, God would increase His Grace so as to enable you to meet it, and that while He does not give you strength for an imaginary or unnecessary conflict, He will not fail you in the time of need. Enough that we always steadfastly desire to fight a good fight, and heartily trust in God's gracious Help promised to us in time of need.

St Francis de Sales.

TUESDAY

'TIS not enough to have one's Face set towards Jerusalem, and to cast some amorous Glances upon the Beauty of Holiness. 'Tis not enough to have some faint ineffectual Wishes, some kind Resentments towards Righteousness. But the Desire must be strong and active, vehement and importunate, absolute and peremptory, without any Reserves or Conditions. It must bear the same Proportion to the Soul, that the keenest Hunger and Thirst does to the Body. Briefly, it must be such a Desire as carries in it the full Bent and Stress of the Soul, such as is accompanied with the most earnest and hearty endeavours, and with the most Passionate and Devout Prayers and Aspirations to God. *John Norris.*

How often do they cry
 MANY there be, who, however they have been dedicated to prayer, yet have no relish of God; because in the end of their prayers they are neither mortified nor attend upon God any longer. For obtaining that peaceable and continual attending, it is necessary to get a great purity of mind and heart, great peace of soul, and an universal resignation. *Molinos.*

WEDNESDAY

WE feed our weakness with vain reflections on ourselves, chiefly when we have swerved from the right way, through some fault.

St Francis de Sales.

WHAT then do I want ?

What you have not : constancy, a mind conformable to nature, and a freedom from perturbation. You have your vessels of gold ; but your discourse, your principles, your assents, your pursuits, your desires, of mere earthenware.

Epictetus.

THE best kind of power is for a man to have the ability and the will to do good, with less or more speed, as he may chance to have. For whosoever desireth to do good, the same desireth to possess goodness, and with goodness to dwell. Therefore was Plato's saying true enough, when he said that only the wise can turn to good what they please, but the wicked cannot even begin to do what they would. Yet perhaps thou wilt say the good at times begin what they cannot bring to an issue ; but I say they always accomplish it. Though they may not be able to bring to pass the deed, yet they have the full purpose ; and the unwavering purpose is to be accounted an act performed, for it never fails of its reward, here or in the next world.

Boethius.

THURSDAY

I HAVE seen men brought up from their youth in God's ways, who, falling back, shewed many traces of better things for a time, so that it was hard to say what they really were ; but after a while it was plain that these traces pertained to a thing that was past, and were merely tokens of what had been. Now all such imperfect love is good in itself as the hand-maid of charity, serving it while present within the soul, ready to serve should it return. Nevertheless this imperfect love is a danger, because we are prone to rest satisfied with it, to take the shadow for the reality, and to imagine ourselves saints, while those sins which drive out real charity are gaining such strength within us at last to win the day. Directly that we lose sight of charity, self-love thrusts forward this imperfect love which is mere habit, and we are satisfied with it, and take it for real charity until some strong light shows us how we have been deluded. Sad indeed it is to see a soul flattering itself with an unreal holiness, and at rest as though possessing charity, and then suddenly discover that its holiness is unreal, its rest a mere torpor, its happiness mere delusion.

St Francis de Sales.

FRIDAY

WHAT profit us His deeds and life,
 His meekness, love so quick to bless,
 If we give way to pride and strife,
 Dishonouring thus His holiness ?
 What profits it, if for reward,
 And not in faith, we call Him Lord ?

Lyra Germanica.

CHRIST was tempted in the Wilderness, and if thou wilt put on Him, thou must go through His whole Progress or Journey, even from His Incarnation to His Ascension. And though thou art not able or required to do that which He hath done ; yet thou must enter wholly into His Process, and therein die continually from the Corruption of the Soul.

Jacob Behmen.

WE have need of the true Moses, even Christ Jesus, that He may at all times guide us and lead us, and draw us to Himself, so that we may go out after Him into the wilderness of our own hearts, wherein God lies hidden to us.

Tauler.

SATURDAY

LORD, Who hast form'd me out of mud,
 And hast redeem'd me through Thy bloud,
 And sanctifi'd me to do good ;
 Purge all my sinnes done heretofore :
 For I confesse my heavie score,
 And I will strive to sinne no more.
 Enrich my heart, mouth, hands in me,
 With faith, with hope, with charitie,
 That I may runne, rise, rest with Thee.

George Herbert.

DO you know what it is to be truly spiritual ? It is to be the slaves of God : those who are signed with His mark—which is that of the cross—He may sell all the world over for slaves, as He Himself was sold. But unless souls are resolved on this, they will never improve much, for the foundation of all this building is humility ; and if this be not very sincere, our Lord will not allow the building to rise high lest it should fall entirely to the ground. It is necessary, for this purpose, that the foundation should not consist of prayer and contemplation only ; for unless you acquire virtues by the exercise of them, you will always be behind : for you know well that in the spiritual life, he who does not increase, must decrease. I consider it impossible for love to stand still.

St Teresa.

Fourth Sunday in Lent

KNOW that your principal end, and the most proper to this divine mystery, is to procure that by receiving Jesus Christ, who is concealed in it, you may receive into your souls His Spirit, by which you may be transformed into Him and brought to live as He did : That is, with the charity, humility, patience, obedience, poverty of Spirit, mortification of the flesh, and contempt of this world, which appeared in Him. It is thus we spiritually eat and drink Jesus by changing ourselves into Him, and making ourselves one and the same thing with Him, through the imitation of His life. See what ought to be our principal end, joined with doing that which He has commanded us, which is to renew at our communion the memory of His Death, and give Him infinite thanks for the inestimable benefit of our Redemption.

St Luis of Granada.

WHAT God gives is His Being, and His Being is His Goodness, and His Goodness is His Love. All sorrow and all joy come from love. *Eckhart.*

MONDAY

THE Mercy Seat is the image of love in full enjoyment, in joy and in glory, beginning and end of all good and all grace. Its breadth is a cubit and a half. The first cubit is entire ; for love bears witness to the spirit, in the supreme act of its enjoyment, that all is fulfilled. The spirit spreads and dilates in the breadth of Essential Love, rapt with delight in its own flame within the heavenly fire which has no end. The blessedness of each spirit corresponds to its holiness. But Superessential Blessedness, which is the common stock, and the public treasury is nothing but an abyss ; inexhaustible, impenetrable. Every one fills his vessels. But Blessedness is superabundant in itself, and its infinity is never drawn upon. I draw, and am still thirsty : I am satisfied, and hunger for ever. It is an insatiable hunger which abundance cannot satisfy. It is eternal. This is the half-cubit which no one can complete : the half-cubit which reaches to the width of the Mercy Seat : for everlasting hunger is the perfection of our blessedness.

Ruysbroek.

TUESDAY

ONCE more, nothing will close your heart so tightly against the grace of renunciation, as this philosophic pride, and this self-love disguised as worldly generosity, which you must distrust on account of the natural and habitual inclination you have towards them. The more one has by nature a basis of frankness, of disinterestedness, of pleasure in doing good, of delicacy of feeling, of liking for uprightness and unselfish friendship, the more must one be on one's guard against self, and against satisfaction in these natural gifts. *Fénelon.*

WHAT is better and nobler than true poorness in spirit? Yet when that is held up before us, we will have none of it, but are always seeking ourselves, and our own things. We like to have our mouths always filled with good things.

Theologia Germanica.

IN the fair of the world, some, like cattle, trouble themselves about nothing but fodder.

Epictetus.

WEDNESDAY

THE Power which He hath given us is His Purpose, for and in which He created Man in His Image. This God hath brought again into the Human Nature, and hath given Power unto that Power to break the Head of Sin in the Flesh, namely, the Will and Desire of the Serpent ; that is, the resigned Will in Christ treadeth upon the Head of the Desire of the sinful Will of the Serpent, and killeth again the Sins which were committed. This Power that is given becometh a Death of Death, and the Power of Life to Life. Therefore no Man can make any Excuse as if he could not will. Indeed, while he sticketh fast in himself, in his own Desire, and serveth only the Law of Sin in the Flesh, he cannot. For he is kept back, as being a Servant of Sin ; but when he turneth the Centre of his Mind away, and directeth it into the Will and Obedience of God, then he can.

Jacob Behmen.

MANY souls there are, which, though they exercise prayer, yet, because they are not mortified, are always imperfect, and full of self-love.

Molinos.

THURSDAY

DISCOURAGEMENT is by no means a humble state of mind ; on the contrary it is the vexation and the despair of a cowardly pride ; nothing is worse. If so be that we stumble, if so be ever that we fall, let us only think about picking ourselves up and pursuing our way : all our faults may be useful to us, provided that in taking from us our abominable self-confidence, they do not take away our humble and salutary confidence in God.

Fénelon.

O THOU, my God ! I have offended Thee ; I have sinned, and Thou hast suffered me : I have offended, and Thou yet endurest me. If I repent, Thou pardonest ; if I return, Thou receivest, nay more than this, whilst I am deferring, Thou expectest me. Thou dost reduce me when I err ; Thou invitest me when I resist ; Thou stayest for me when I am dull ; Thou embracest me when I return, Thou teachest me when I am ignorant ; Thou cherishest me when I am afflicted ; Thou raisest me whilst I fall ; Thou restorest me when I am fallen ; Thou givest me when I ask ; Thou art found when I seek ; and Thou openest when I knock.

St Augustine.

FRIDAY

ALAS ! Faith is become but Historical, a mere Assent to the Matter of Fact that Jesus Christ lived and died, that the Jews killed Him, that He left this World, and is not King on Earth in the outward Man ; but that Men may do what they list, and need not die from Sin and their evil Lusts. All this the wicked Child Self rejoiceth in, that it may fatten the Devil by living deliciously.

Jacob Behmen.

SELF-LOVE is to *will* well to self alone, and not to others, except for the sake of self ; also in conferring benefits merely for the sake of one's own reputation, honour and glory. The man who is in self-love, loves also those who belong to him, and all who act in unity with him, and whom he calls his friends. To love them is also to love himself. His delight is solely the delight of self-love, and since the delight which proceeds from love makes the life of man, therefore his life is a life of self. So far as any one loves himself, he removes himself from the Divine, when he is led by his hereditary evil nature, which consists in loving himself more than God, and the world more than heaven.

Swedenborg.

SATURDAY

WHEN a soul offers herself to Jesus truly, and meekly puts all her trust and her desire in Him, and busily keeps Him in her mind, our Lord Jesus, when He wills, purges the affection of the soul, and fills it and feeds it with sweetness of Himself, and makes His name in the feeling of the soul as honey, and as song, and as anything that is delightful.

Richard Rolle.

HE who goes to the sea to fetch water, takes as much as the vessel he carries along with him can contain. There will be no want of water in the sea, which is an infinite abyss : but he will have only according to the greatness of his vessel.

St Luis of Granada.

O GOD, Who requirest that we seek Thee, and Who makest us find Thee, and Who openest to us when we knock : O God, from Whom to be averted, is to fall ; and to Whom to be converted, is to rise ; and in Whom to remain, is to consist : O God, Whom to know, is to live ; Whom to serve, is to reign, I praise Thee, I bless Thee, and I adore Thee.

St Augustine.

Fifth Sunday in Lent

IF thou carry the Cross cheerfully it will carry thee,
and lead thee to the desired end, namely where
there shall be an end of suffering, though here there
shall be none. If thou carry it unwillingly, thou
makest for thyself a burden, and addest to thy load,
and yet thou must bear. *Thomas à Kempis.*

WHEN I remember Christ our burden beares,
I looke for glorie, but finde miserie ;
I looke for joy, but finde a sea of teares ;
I looke that we should live, and finde Him die ;
I looke for angels' songs, and heare Him crie ;
Thus what I looke I cannot finde so well ;
Or rather, what I finde, I cannot tell,
These bankes so narrowe are, those streames so
highly swell.

Christ suffers, and in this His teares begin ;
Suffers for us—and our joy springs in this ;
Suffers to death—here is His manhood seen ;
Suffers to rise—and here His Godhead is.
For man, that could not by himselfe have ris,
Out of the grave doth by the Godhead rise,
And God, that could not die, in manhood dies,
That we in both might live by that sweet sacrifice.
Giles Fletcher.

MONDAY

ADAM was the first vessel, and he marred himself in the hands of his Potter, and the Potter passed on him the sentence of death ; He broke the mould and made a new one. And the new one is Christ the Lord from heaven, the man raised from the dead, incorruptible, with the blessing upon Him, even life for evermore. Christ became the Head of the new work on the wheels by dying willingly. God has sentenced the first vessel, the natural life, to be broken, because it was polluted ; yet He does not intend to destroy the clay, but to new-model it under Christ the second vessel. The curse always rests on the first vessel, and the blessing always rests on the second ; and both vessels are in the nature, and every man may live in which he will, but he cannot enjoy the second without consenting to the breaking of the first, *i.e.* through willing death.

Erskine of Linlathen.

O THOU great Fountain of the Love of God, I beseech Thee, help me, that I may die from my Vanity and Sin in the Death of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Jacob Behmen.

TUESDAY

THE dispensation of our God and Saviour concerning man is a recall from the fall, and a return from the alienation caused by disobedience to close communion with God. This is the reason for the sojourn of Christ in the flesh, the pattern life described in the Gospels, the sufferings, the cross, the tomb, the resurrection ; so that the man who is being saved through imitation of Christ receives that old adoption. For perfection of life the imitation of Christ is necessary, not only in the example of gentleness, lowliness and longsuffering set us in His life, but also of His actual death. *St Basil.*

JESUS said, "Would'st thou love one who had never died
For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for thee?"
And if God dieth not for man, and giveth not Himself
Eternally for man, man could not exist, for man is love
As God is love. Every kindness to another is a little Death
In the Divine Image, nor can man exist but by brotherhood. *Blake.*

WEDNESDAY

THUS was all His life, from the manger to the cross, a mingled web of grief and joy. Which life He hath left as a sacred testament to His followers in this present time, who are converted unto His dying life, that they may remember Him when they drink of His cup, and walk as He hath walked.

Tauler.

INDEED if there had been any thing better and more profitable to man's salvation than suffering, Christ would surely have shewn it by word and example.

Thomas à Kempis.

KNOW that pure, perfect and essential love consists in the cross, in self-denial and resignation, in perfect humility, in poverty of spirit, and in a mean opinion of thyself.

Molinos.

LIVE Jesus, Live, and let it bee
My Life, to dye for love of thee.

Crashaw.

THURSDAY

THREE Things are requisite for thee : the first is, thou must resign thy Will to God, and sink thyself down to the Ground in His Mercy. The second is, thou must hate thy own Will, and not do that whereto thy own Will driveth thee. The third is, thou must submit thyself under the Cross, that thou mayest be able to bear the Temptation of Nature and Creature. If thou dost, God will speak into thee, and bring thy resigned Will into Himself ; and then thou shalt hear what the Lord speaketh in thee.

Jacob Behmen.

NOW, that we may be one with Christ, we must suffer ourselves to be emptied of our own, that we may be filled with His Spirit, which we cannot be so long as we are full of ourselves.

Mme. Guyon.

HE who is too full of his own joys and sorrows to get beyond himself, can never come to know himself.

Tauler.

FRIDAY

JESUS has now many lovers of His heavenly kingdom ; but few bearers of His Cross. He has many that long for consolation ; but few that long for tribulation. He finds many companions of His table ; but few of His fast. All desire to rejoice with Him ; few are willing to suffer anything for Him. *Thomas à Kempis.*

THE crosses that we choose are almost nothing at all : only God knows how to crucify.

Fénelon.

I KNOW some who proceed as they ought, by the way of love, in order solely to serve Jesus Christ crucified. Let Him do with us as He pleases, and lead us whatever way He wills. I firmly believe that whoever will truly humble and annihilate themselves (I say "truly" because we must not act according to our fancy, which often deceives, but should be wholly disengaged from every thing) our Lord will not fail to bestow this grace of humility, and many other favours upon them, which we know not how to desire.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

WHAT profit ye His death and cross,
 Unless to self ye also die ?
 Ye love your life to find it loss,
 Afraid the flesh to crucify.
 Wouldst live to this world still ? Then know
 His death to thee is barren show.
Lyra Germanica.

HOW did the weight
 Of all our sinnes,
 And death unite
 To wrench and Rack thy blessed limbes !
 How pale, and bloudie
 Lookt thy Body !
 How bruis'd, and broke
 With every stroke !
 How meek and patient was thy spirit !
 How didst thou cry,
 And grone on high
Father forgive,
 And let them live !
 I dye to make my foes inherit !
Henry Vaughan.

Palm Sunday

IT was but now they gather'd blooming May,
 And of his armes disrob'd the branching tree,
 To strowe with boughs and blossomes all Thy way ;
 And now the branchlesse trunke a crosse for Thee
 And May dismai'd, Thy coronet must be :
 It was but now they were so kind, to throwe
 Their owne best garments where Thy feet should
 goe,
 And now Thy selfe they strip, and bleeding wounds
 they show. *Giles Fletcher.*

TREES, flowers and herbs ; birds, beasts and
 stones,
 That since man fell expect with groans
 To see the Lamb, come all at once,
 Lift up your heads and leave your moans !
 For here comes he
 Whose death will be
 Man's life, and your full liberty.

Dear feast of Palms, of Flowers and Dew !
 Whose fruitful dawn sheds hopes and lights ;
 Thy bright solemnities did shew,
 The third glad day through two sad nights.

I'll get me up before the Sun,
 I'll cut me boughs off many a tree,
 And all alone full early run
 To gather flowers to wellcome thee.

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

I UNDERSTOOD that we be now, in our Lord's meaning, in His Cross with Him in His pains and His Passion, dying ; and we, willingly abiding in the same Cross with His help and His grace unto the last point, suddenly He shall change His Cheer to us, and we shall be with Him in Heaven. Betwixt that one and that other shall be no time, and then all shall be brought to joy. And thus said He : *Where is now any point of thy pain, or thy grief?* And we shall be full blessed. And here saw I verily that if He shewed now to us His Blissful Cheer, there is no pain in earth or in other place that should aggrieve us ; but all things should be to us joy and bliss. But because He sheweth to us time of His Passion, as He bare it in *this* life, and His Cross, therefore we are in distress and travail, with Him, as our frailty asketh. And the cause why He suffereth it to be so is for that He will of His goodness make us the higher with Him in His bliss : and for this little pain that we suffer here, we shall have an high endless knowing in God which we could never have without that. And the harder our pains have been with Him in His Cross, the more shall our worship be with Him in His Kingdom.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

TUESDAY

WHAT is true obedience? I answer, that a man should so stand free, being quit of himself, that is, of his I, and Me, and Self, and Mine, and the like, that in all things he should no more seek or regard himself than if he did not exist. Hereby we may mark what disobedience is: to wit, that a man maketh some account of himself; and thinketh that he is, and knoweth, and can do somewhat, and seeketh himself and his own ends in the things around him, and hath regard to and loveth himself.

Theologia Germanica.

THEY 'have left thee naked, Lord, O that they had!

This garment too I would they had deny'd.
Thee with thy self they have too richly clad;
Opening the purple wardrobe in thy side.
O never could there be garment too good
For thee to wear, But this, of thine own Blood.

Crashaw.

WHEREFORE we be not only His by His buying, but also by the courteous gift of His Father we be His bliss, we be His meed, we be His worship, we be His crown. And this was a singular marvel, and a full delectable beholding that we be His crown! This that I say is so great bliss to Jesus that He setteth at nought all His travail and His hard Passion, and His cruel and shameful death.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

WEDNESDAY

SEE drowsy Peter, see where Judas wakes,
Where Judas kisses Him whom Peter flies :
O kisse more deadly than the sting of snakes !
False love more hurtful than true injuries !
Aye me ! how dearly God His servant buys !
For God His man at His owne blood doth hold,
And man His God, for thirtie pence hath sold :
So tinne for silver goes, and dunghill drosse for gold.

Giles Fletcher.

OTHER men also, that love not Christ, nor His
Passion, are not reformed in their souls to His
likeness, and these are false Christians which are out
of grace and charity, and live and die in deadly sin.
These men know well, as it seemeth, that Jesus is
God's Son, and that His Passion sufficeth to the
salvation of man's soul ; and they believe also the
other articles of faith. But it is an unshapen and
dead faith, for they love Him not, nor choose the
fruit of His Passion, but lie still in their sins, and in
the false love of this world, unto their last end.

Walter Hilton.

CHRIST when he dy'd
Deceived the Crosse ;
And on death's side
Threw all the losse.
The captive world awak't, and found
The prisoners loose, the Jaylor bound.

Crashaw.

THURSDAY

LOVE bade me welcome : yet my soul drew back,
 Guiltie of dust and sinne.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
 From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
 If I lack'd any thing.
A guest, I answer'd, worthy to be here :
 Love said, you shall he be.
I the unkinde, ungratefull ? Ah my deare,
 I cannot look on thee.
Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 Who made the eyes but I ?
Truth Lord, but I have marr'd them : let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve.
And know you not, sayes Love, who bore the blame ?
 My deare, then I will serve.
You must sit down, sayes Love, and taste my meat :
 So I did sit and eat.

George Herbert.

Good Friday

O ALL ye, who passe by, whose eyes and minde
To worldly things are sharp, but to Me blinde ;
To Me, who took eyes that I might you finde :

Was ever grief like Mine ? . . .

Hark how they crie aloud still, Crucifie :

It is not fit He live a day, they crie,

Who cannot live less than eternally :

Was ever grief like Mine ? . . .

O all ye who passe by, behold and see :

Man stole the fruit, but I must climbe the tree :

The tree of life to all, but onely Me :

Was ever grief like Mine ?

Lo, here I hang, charg'd with a world of sinne,

The greater world o' th' two ; for that came in

By words, but this by sorrow I must win :

Was ever grief like Mine ? . . .

They part My garments, and by lot dispose

My coat, the type of love, which once cur'd those

Who sought for help, never malicious foes :

Was ever grief like Mine ?

Nay, after death their spite shall further go ;

For they will pierce My side, I full well know ;

That as sinne came, so Sacraments might flow :

Was ever grief like Mine ?

But now I die ; now all is finished.

My woe, man's weal : and now I bow My head ;

Onely let others say, when I am dead,

Never was grief like Mine.

George Herbert.

Easter Eve

BUT must thy bed, Lord, be a borrow'd grave
 Who lend'st to all things All the Life they have ?
 O rather use this Heart, thus farr a fitter Stone,
 'Cause, though a hard and cold one, yett it is thine
 owne. *Crashaw.*

HE that keeps his heart clean and peaceful, wraps
 up Jesus in fair white linen, and entombs Him
 in his breast. *Thomas à Kempis.*

SO I may gaine thy death, my life I'll give
 My life's thy death, and in thy death I live.
 Or else, my life, I'll hide thee in his grave,
 By three days losse æternally to save.
Crashaw.

HE that gives humble and devout thanks for the
 blessings he has received, comes with Mary
 Magdalene, bringing sweet perfume to the sepulchre
 of Jesus. *Thomas à Kempis.*

HERE where our Lord once laid his head
 Now the grave lyes buried.

Crashaw.

Easter Day

RISE heart ; thy Lord is risen. Sing His praise
Without delayes,
Who takes thee by the hand that thou likewise
With Him mayst rise :
That, as His death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more just.
George Herbert.

O THOU deep Love, I pray Thee take the Desire
of my Soul into Thee ; bring it forth out of the
Bonds of Death through Thy Death, in Thy
Resurrection, in Thee. O quicken me in Thy
Strength, that my Desire and Will may begin
and spring up and flourish anew. O Thou
Vanquisher of Death and of the Wrath of God, do
Thou overcome in me Self: break its Will and
bruise my Soul, that it may fear before Thee, and be
ashamed of its own Will before Thy Judgment, and
that it may be ever obedient to Thee as an Instru-
ment of Thine. Subdue it in the Bonds of Death :
take away its Power, that it may will nothing
without Thee.
Jacob Behmen.

THE Paschal Lamb was truly and properly one :
Christ our Passover is slain. But yet it was
to be slain in each house of Israel : mark that.
Erskine of Linlathen.

MONDAY

O LORD JESUS, I beseech Thee, by that glorious Resurrection of Thine, raise me up from the sepulchre of all my vices and sins ; and be daily giving me a part in this Resurrection by grace, that I may obtain to be made a true partaker of Thy Resurrection to glory.

St Augustine.

VIRTUE is a will in conformity to God and Christ in life, rightly adjusted to life everlasting. For the life of Christians is a system of reasonable actions,—that is, of those things taught by the Word,—an unfailing energy which we have called faith. Whence also duties are essential for divine discipline, as being enjoined by God, and furnished for our salvation.

Clement of Alexandria.

WHEN the disciples were drawn out of themselves, and were delivered from natural self-seeking, was there an extinction of their natural powers, so that they were dead to nature ? No : their nature was not extinguished, for they were much more truly according to nature in their self surrender than they had ever been before : their nature did not perish, but was exalted and brought into rightful order.

Tauler.

TUESDAY

THIS becoming one with the eternal Goodness cannot come to pass but by an absolute renunciation of our Self and all that is ours, natural or spiritual ; for in the same measure that a man comes out from himself, in that measure does God enter in with His divine grace, and he that loseth his life shall find it. *Tauler.*

LORD, when the sense of thy sweet grace
Sends up my soul to seek thy face,
Thy blessed eyes breed such desire,
I dy in love's delicious Fire.

O love, I am thy Sacrifice.
Be still triumphant, blessed eyes.
Still shine on me, fair suns ! that I
Still may behold, though still I dy.

Though still I dy, I live again ;
Still longing so to be still slain,
So gainfull is such losse of breath,
I dy even in desire of death.

Still live in me this loving strife
Of living Death and dying Life,
For while thou sweetly slayest me
Dead to my selfe, I live in Thee.

Crashaw.

WEDNESDAY

THE soul cannot live without a life of some kind.

There are but two, and can be but two principles of moral life in the universe ; one which makes ourselves, or the most limited private good, the centre : the other, which makes God, Who may be called the Universal Good, the centre. When *self* dies in the soul, God lives : when *self* is annihilated, God is enthroned.

Mme. Guyon.

I HAVE ranged my pursuits under the direction of God. Is it his will that I should have a fever ? It is my will too. Is it his will that I should pursue anything ? It is my will too. Is it his will that I should desire ? It is my will too. Is it his will that I should obtain anything ? It is mine too. Is it not his will ? It is not mine. Is it his will that I should be tortured ? Then it is my will to be tortured. A person who reasons thus, understands and considers that if he joins himself to God, he shall go safely through his journey.—“How do you mean, join himself ?” That whatever is the will of God may be his will too ; whatever is not the will of God may not be his.

Epictetus.

THURSDAY

THE soul proceeding to and having now arrived at the desired end, and participating of deity, will know that the supplier of true life is then present. She will likewise then require nothing farther ; for on the contrary, it will be requisite to lay aside other things, to stop in this alone, and to become this alone, amputating every thing else with which she is surrounded. Hence it is necessary to hasten our departure from hence, and to be indignant that we are bound in one part of our nature, in order that with the whole of our true selves, we may fold ourselves about Divinity, and have no part void of contact with Him. When this takes place therefore, the soul will both see Divinity and herself, as far as it is lawful for her to see Him. And she will see herself indeed illuminated, and full of intelligible light. . . . But if she again becomes heavy, she then as it were wastes away.

Plotinus.

FRIDAY

IT were not worth the while to have been born or to live, had it been only for such a penurious end as ourselves are : it is most godlike and best suits with the spirit of religion, for a Christian to live wholly to God, to live the life of God, "having his own life hid with Christ in God : " and thus in a sober sense he becomes deified. This is indeed such a "deification" as is not transacted merely upon the stage of fancy by arrogance and presumption, but in the highest powers of the soul by a living and quickening spirit of true religion there uniting God and the soul together in the unity of affections, will, and end.

John Smith.

PAUL reckons himself perfect because he has been emancipated from his former life, and strives after the better life : not as perfect in knowledge, but as aspiring after perfection. Wherefore also he adds : "As many of us as are perfect are thus minded," manifestly describing perfection as the renunciation of sin, and regeneration into the faith of the only perfect One, and forgetting our former sins.

Clement of Alexandria.

SATURDAY

LORD, Thou art mine, and I am Thine,
If mine I am : and Thine much more,
Than I or ought, or can be mine.
Yet to be Thine, doth me restore ;
So that again I now am mine,
And with advantage mine the more.
Since this being mine, brings with it Thine,
And Thou with me dost Thee restore.
If I without Thee would be mine,
I neither should be mine nor Thine.

Lord, I am mine, and Thou art mine,
So mine Thou art, that something more
I may presume Thee mine, than Thine,
For Thou didst suffer to restore
Not Thee, but me, and to be mine :
And with advantage mine the more,
Since Thou in death wast none of Thine,
Yet then as mine didst me restore.

O be mine still ! still make me Thine,
Or rather make no Thine and Mine !

George Herbert. ♡

First Sunday after Easter

WHATEVER a man with his whole heart, and mind, love, and desire, wills to be, that without doubt, he most truly is. *Tauler.*

MAN, viewed in himself, is nothing but his own good and truth ; because good is of his will, and truth is of his understanding, and man is such as his will and understanding are. *Swedenborg.*

IS it not also evident, that with reference to things just and beautiful, the multitude choose the apparent, even though they be not really so, and they do, or seem to do them, and possess or appear to possess them ; but the acquisition of good, that were only the apparent, never yet satisfied any one ; but in this they seek what is real, and here every one despises what is only the apparent. *Plato.*

WE would see God in ourselves : and we must only see ourselves in God. We must only love ourselves as for God, instead of which we are always trying, if we are not careful, only to love God for ourselves. *Fénelon.*

MONDAY

HAVING once dedicated and lovingly resigned thyself to the will of God, there is nothing else for thee to do but to continue the same, without repeating new and sensible acts, provided thou takest not back the jewel thou hast once given, by committing some notable fault against His Divine will ; though thou oughtest still to exercise thyself outwardly in the external works of thy calling and state, for in so doing thou doest the will of God, and walkest in continual and virtual oration : *He always prays*, said Theophylact, *who does good works, nor does he neglect prayer but when he leaves off to be just.* Thou oughtest, then, to slight all those sensibilities, to the end thy soul may be established, and acquire a habit of internal recollection, which is so effectual that the resolution only of going to prayer awakens a lively presence of God, which is the preparation to the prayer that is about to be made ; or, to say better, is no other than a more efficacious continuation of continual prayer.

Molinos.

TUESDAY

THE being of God is uncreate, ours is created ; the gulf cannot be spanned, the distinction is eternal. Prodigies of love can never efface it ; transports of divine union can never procure unity of nature : the creature can never become God. Never can it identify itself with Him. Divine union comes about by love ; but the creature feels and sees between God and itself the eternal and insuperable distinction.

Ruysbroek.

OUR blessedness consists in this, that we recognise and know the highest good, which is God Himself. I have a power in my soul that is altogether susceptible of God. I am as sure as that I live, that nothing is so near to me as God. God is nearer to me than I am to myself ; and my existence depends on this, that God is close to me, and ever present.

Eckhart.

THE work of God in us does not confer upon us either unity of essence, or unity of nature with God, but unity of love.

Ruysbroek.

WEDNESDAY

SO long as a man taketh account of anything, whether it be himself or any other creature, or doeth anything, or frameth a purpose, for the sake of his own likings, or desires, or opinions, or ends, he cometh not unto the life of Christ.

Theologia Germanica.

BEEES gather honey from thyme and rosemary no less than from the more showy garden flowers, and the honey sucked from these fragrant herbs is even sweeter than the other. So true love finds a purer, as well as a more frequent opportunity of testifying itself in little things than in great. The kindly forbearance towards another, the trifling victory over temper and passion, the self-denial in some little matter, the resistance to a dislike, the honest acknowledgment of a fault, the effort to be calm and even-tempered, the willingly accepted humiliation and censure—all these things, be sure, are a more precious harvest than we are wont to think, provided they be wrought for the love of God.

St Francis de Sales.

THURSDAY

THE presence of God is not an external separation from external things ; it is solitude of spirit ; if this is yours, you will so deeply penetrate persons and things, that they will lose all power against you.

Ruysbroek.

I WILL not let Thee go ; Thou Help in time of need !

Heap ill on ill

I trust Thee still,

E'en when it seems that Thou wouldst slay indeed !

Do as Thou wilt with me

I yet will cling to Thee,

Hide Thou Thy face, yet, Help in time of need,

I will not let Thee go.

I will not let Thee go, my God, my Life, my Lord !

Not Death can tear

Me from His care,

Who for my sake His soul in death outpour'd.

Thou diedst for love of me,

I say in love to Thee

E'en when my heart shall break, my God, my Life,
my Lord,

I will not let Thee go !

Lyra Germanica.

FRIDAY

ALMOST all who think to serve God, think only of themselves. They think to gain, and not to lose ; to be consoled, and not to suffer ; to possess, and not to be deprived ; to grow, and never to decrease : while, on the contrary, all our spiritual travail consists in loss, in sacrifice, in growing less, in diminishing and despoiling oneself even of the gifts of God, in order to hold to nothing but Himself.

Fénelon.

WITH many, when God comes to them with His touch and His gracious gifts, He finds the chambers of their soul occupied and defiled by other guests. So then, He must needs go His way, and cannot come in to us, for we are loving and serving someone else. Therefore His gifts, which He offers without ceasing to every man, remain unaccepted.

Tauler.

TRUE religion does not consist in a mere passive capacity, in a sluggish kind of doing nothing, that so God Himself might do all, but it consists in life and power within.

John Smith.

SATURDAY

MAN is a spirit ; from that he thinks and wills :
 wherefore the spiritual world is where man is,
 and in no way far from him. *Swedenborg.*

A FIRM belief of God being present in the ground
 of our hearts, must needs engage us to sink
 down into ourselves, gathering all the thoughts in-
 ward, and hindering them from being scattered
 abroad ; which is a powerful means of ridding us
 from a multitude of distractions, and of removing us
 far from outward objects, that we may approach unto
 God, Who cannot be found but in the inward ground
 of ourselves, and in our centre, which is the Holy of
 Holies, where He dwells. *Mme. Guyon.*

ALL men are His : some through knowledge, and
 others not yet so ; and some as friends, some as
 faithful servants, some as servants merely.
Clement of Alexandria.

Second Sunday after Easter

THINK how Jesus knows the Father, and then say this is the way in which the sheep know Jesus. It is not the ordinance of Jesus that they know, but Jesus Himself, as it was not the Father's ordinance that Jesus knew, but the Father Himself; and so the true knowledge of an ordinance in the Church does not consist in discerning and acknowledging it to be of Christ's appointment, but in meeting Christ in it.

Erskine of Linlathen.

WE are under a delusion when we think that in the course of years we shall come to the knowledge of that which we can in no way attain to but by experience; and thus many are in error when they would understand spirituality without being spiritual themselves.

St Teresa.

THE penances which we choose, or which we accept when imposed on us, do not kill our self-love, as do those which God lays upon us every day.

Fénelon.

MONDAY

HE that doth seek and love
 The things above,
 Whose spirit ever poor is meek and low ;
 Who simple still and wise,
 Still homewards flies,
 Quick to advance, and to retreat most slow.

Whose acts, words and pretence
 Have all one sense,
 One aim and end ; who walks not by his sight :
 Whose eyes are both put out,
 And goes about
 Guided by faith, not by exterior light.

Who bears his cross with joy,
 And doth imploy
 His heart and tongue in prayers for his foes ;
 Who lends not to be paid,
 And gives full aid
 Without that bribe which Usurers impose.

Who doth thus, and doth not
 These good deeds blot
 With bad, or with neglect ; and heaps not wrath
 By secret filth, nor seeds
 Some snake, or weeds,
 Cheating himself ; That man walks in this path.

Henry Vaughan,

TUESDAY

NO one can be made perfect in a day. A man must begin by denying himself, and willingly forsaking all things for God's sake, and must give up his own will, and all his natural inclinations, and separate and cleanse himself thoroughly from all sins and evil ways. After this, let him humbly take up the cross and follow Christ.

Theologia Germanica.

IF ye cannot be as entirely His as ye fain would be, be His as much as ye may attain unto.

Tauler.

THOU shouldst give thyself, and all that is thine, to Me, cheerfully, and never take it back. All that is not of absolute necessity to thee, shouldst thou leave untouched ; then will thy hands be truly nailed to My cross ; thou shouldst gaily set about good works, and be firm in them ; then will thy left foot be made fast. Thy inconstant mind and wandering thoughts shouldst thou make constant and collected in Me ; and thus will thy right foot be nailed to My cross ; thy mental and bodily powers ought not to seek rest in lukewarmness ; in the likeness of My arms ought they to be stretched out and distended in My service.

Suso.

WEDNESDAY

THE soul founded on virtue has put its self-will to death in spiritual things as in temporal ; it is patient, faithful, hopes in God and not in itself or its works : is humble and obedient, believing others rather than itself, because it does not presume. It stretches wide the arms of mercy, and thereby drives forth confusion of mind. In shadows and conflicts it uplifts the light of faith, labouring manfully, with true and profound humility. It is strong and persevering, because it has put to death its own will, which made it weak and inconstant. It finds prayer in every place, for it bears ever with it the place wherein God lives by grace, and where we ought to pray—that is, the house of our soul wherein holy desire prays constantly. So make we our prayer continuous and faithful ; because in the fire of His love we know that He is powerful to give us what we ask. He is Highest Wisdom, who knows how to give and discern what we need ; He is a most piteous and gracious Father, who wishes to give us more than we desire, and more than we know how to ask for our need. The soul is humble, for it has recognised its own defects, and that in itself it is not. This is the kind of prayer through which we attain virtue, and preserve in our souls the longing for it.

St Catherine of Siena.

SECOND WEEK AFTER EASTER 165

THURSDAY

SELF-WILL that is forsaken and made common, then is it accordant with God's will, and all good men's will. This common will is soothfastly called the most precious offering and the most dear present that may be given unto God : and therefore it is called earthly heaven, for why, it harbours God. It is God's temple, it is the chosen chamber of Jesus, it is the homely house of the Holy Ghost.

Walter Hilton.

IT is believed that the Lord, because He is to be adored, worshipped and glorified, loves adoration, worship and glory for His own sake ; but He loves these things for man's sake ; because man comes thereby into a state in which the Divine can flow in and be perceived ; for in the process man removes the proprium which hinders influx and reception : the proprium, which is the love of self, hardens the heart, and shuts it up.

Swedenborg.

THIS is His will : that we should cease to regard our own wishes or dislikes ; that it should become a light matter to us whether He give or take away, and let all things go, if only we may receive and apprehend God Himself ; that whether things please or displease us, we may leave all things to take their course and cleave to Him alone.

Tauler.

FRIDAY

KNOW likewise, that you are a brother ; and that to this character it belongs to make concessions ; to be easily persuaded ; to use gentle language ; never to claim for yourself any of the things dependent on choice, but cheerfully to give these, that you may have the larger share of what is not dependent on it. For consider what it is, instead of a lettuce, for instance, or a chair, to procure for yourself a good temper ? How great an advantage gained !

Epictetus.

NEITHER may a man who is made a partaker of the divine nature, oppress or grieve any one. That is, it never entereth into his thoughts or intents or wishes, to cause pain or distress to any, either by deed or neglect, by speech or silence.

Theologia Germanica.

TO love, to hold your tongue, to suffer, to act against the grain, in order to accomplish the will of God, accommodating yourself to the will of your neighbour, this is your lot ; thrice happy in bearing the cross God gives you with His own hands, in the course of His Providence.

Fénelon.

SATURDAY

PETTY things bind and contract our spirits, so that they feel little joy in God, little ardent, active desire to do Him service, to crucify sin, to break and undo self-love within us, to root up our own wills to make room for His, that His alone may be ours, that we may have no will of our own, that our daily work may be to grow like Him in the beauty of holiness. You think it a hard saying to part with your carnal lusts and delights, and the common way of the world, and to be tied to a strict exact conversation all your days. But oh ! the reason of this is because the heart is yet straitened and enthralled by the base love of these mean things, and that is from the ignorance of things higher and better. One glance of God, a touch of His love, will free and enlarge the heart, so that it can deny all, and make an entire renouncing of all, to follow Him. Cry to Him, "Help Lord, set me free from my narrow heart. —I know little of Thee, my affections are dead and cold towards Thee.—Lord, I desire to love Thee ; here is my heart, and lest it fly out, lay hold on it, and take Thine own way with it." Let who will fancy themselves masters of their own hearts, and think to enlarge them by the strength of their own stretches of speculation ; they alone are in the sure and happy way of attaining it, that humbly suit and wait for this enlargement of heart from His hand that made it.

Archbp. Leighton.

Third Sunday after Easter

THERE is reason to think that God will bring out of particular error and mistake, him that is right in the main. *Whichcote.*

BRIEFLY, *Doe as thou would'st be done unto,
Love God and love thy Neighbour ; Watch, and Pray.*
These are the Words and Works of life : This do,
And live ; who doth not thus, hath lost Heaven's way.
O lose it not ! look up, wilt Change those Lights
For Chains of Darknes and Eternal Nights ?
Henry Vaughan.

GOODNESSE is so powerfull, that it can make things simply evil (namely our Sinnes) good to us : not good in nature, but good in the event ; good when they are done, not good to be done. Sinne is so powerfull, that it can turne the holiest Ordinances of God into it selfe : But herein our Sinne goes beyond our Goodnesse. That Sinne defiles a Man or action otherwise good ; but all the Goodnesse of the World cannot justify one Sinne : as the holy Flesh in the Skirt, makes not the Bread holy that toucheth it ; but the uncleane, touching an holy thing, defileth it. I will loathe every evil for its owne sake ; I will do good, but not trust to it.

Bishop Hall.

MONDAY

BEWARE of one harassing temptation with which Satan often hinders souls which are earnestly set upon doing everything to the utmost in accordance with God's Will. This is the raising of scruples as to whether a man had better do one thing rather than another in some trifle—whether he shall join some social gathering or not, whether he shall observe certain days rather than others, indulge in some innocent amusement, or the like ; and while he is fidgeting and fussing over his scruples as to what is best, he loses the opportunity of doing some unquestionable good deed, which would be more to God's Glory than all this weighing of scruples. That is no faithful service which wastes half its time in resolving what to do, instead of doing what is requisite. The consideration given to any work should be measured by its importance ; there is no need to make as weighty preparations for a day's journey as for a long voyage. In ordinary daily life, where the alternatives are comparatively indifferent, there is no need to be full of restless scruples and consultations, and it is best to be simple and straightforward, doing whatever seems best without worrying ourselves, losing time, and incurring the danger always attending on scruples.

St Francis de Sales.

TUESDAY

AND for our mistakes, so our heart be right, God will mend them, by His own candid construction, and gracious interpretation. *Whichcote.*

SAFETIE consisteth not in not sinning, but in repenting: neither is it sinne that condemnes, but impenitence. O Lord, I cannot be righteous, let me be repentant. *Bishop Hall.*

MANY are they who are called to perfection, but few are they that arrive at it; because they are few who embrace the cross with patience, constancy, peace, and resignation. *Molinos.*

TO each day is sufficient its good and evil. This daily fulfilment of the will of God, is the coming of His kingdom within us, and these together are our daily bread. *Fénelon.*

A MAN can save his soul, and receive the life of grace into himself, in whatever condition he may be, but not while he abides in guilt of mortal sin. For every condition is pleasing to God, and He is the acceptor, not of men's conditions, but of holy desire. *St Catherine of Siena.*

WEDNESDAY

I WRITE and commend me in the Precious Blood of the Son of God, with desire to see you kindled and inflamed in the furnace of divine Charity, and your own self-will—the will that robs us of all life—consumed therein. We have two wills—one of the senses, which seeks the things of sense, and the other the self-will of the spirit, which under aspect and colour of virtue, holds firm to its own way. The soul, which is inspired by what gives sweetness, suffers when deprived of it, and feels annoyance. This soul is deceived by its self-will. For it would not be deprived of sweetness ; with this bait the devil catches it. Frequently men lose time in longing for time to suit themselves, for they do not employ what they have otherwise than in suffering and gloominess.

St Catherine of Siena.

WHICHEVER way you turn, all through this life, you will find the cross, for the devil and the world have their crosses also, although very different from the cross of Jesus Christ : and of the kingdom of heaven ; for there were three crosses, very different from each other, on Calvary, a cross of despair, a cross of penitence, and a cross of sanctification and redemption ; you must bear one or another of them : Choose ; but let your choice be for good and all.

Le Mystère de la Croix.

THURSDAY

MEN are more what they are used to, than what they are born to ; for custom is a second nature. Every man hath himself as he useth himself.
Whichcote.

A GREAT defect in the spiritual life is to behave oneself coldly in the exercise of prayer, as many do who come to it with sloth, continue it weakly, and finish it without profit. Another is to be over-indulgent to oneself. He who lives for himself will hardly live for God : and he who endeavours not daily to mortify himself will never be the servant of God. A third defect is not to give oneself sufficiently to recollection ; but to be found ordinarily distracted and wandering out of oneself ; whence a man comes to be ignorant of what he is, and knows not how to disesteem himself as he ought, or watch over his own actions, as much as is necessary. A fourth is to love oneself too much, to be too much bent to one's own will and appetites : They that live thus, believe the cross of Jesus Christ to be an intolerable burden, and the perfection of the evangelical life a yoke which cannot be borne.
St Luis of Granada.

FRIDAY

THERE are two sorts of men who follow after the word of Christ. The one sort hear it with joy, and follow after it as far as they are able with their reason to perceive its truth, but they make no account of anything that they themselves do not feel or enter into ; but with their natural powers they are ever running out to catch up and understand some new thing. They have not learnt by experience that they ought to die to this restlessness, but if they are ever to grow better men, they must try another road. The other sort turn their thoughts inward, and remain resting on the inmost foundation of their souls, simply looking to see the hand of God with the eyes of their enlightened reason, and await from within their summons and their call to go whither God would have them. You may ask, How can we come to perceive this direct leading of God ? By a careful looking at home, and abiding within the gates of thy own soul. Therefore let a man be at home in his own heart, and cease from his restless chase of and search after outward things. *Tauler.*

SATURDAY

IF we spend so much time with others, who will not thank us for it, let us give to our Lord that short space of time which we have resolved to give Him ; let us likewise give it to Him, with our thoughts free and disengaged from other things, and with a firm resolution of never recalling it again, whatever crosses may happen to us,—whatever contradictions—whatever aridities : but rather let us think that time as not our own, and remember it may with justice be required of us, when we do not entirely give it to Him.

St Teresa.

THERE are some who say their prayers and read their Bibles, and perform their dry works of obedience with the outward man and their senses ; and with this they are well satisfied. Let God unite Himself with whom He will, what does that concern them ? Hence, in spite of their pious acts, it comes to this, that when they are called on to renounce their own way and will, they behave as if they were deaf or senseless.

Tauler.

Fourth Sunday after Easter

SELF-SURRENDER consists in a continual forsaking and losing all self-will in the will of God : in renouncing all particular inclinations, how good soever they may seem to be ; making ourselves content in the actual moment, seeing it brings with it the eternal order of God concerning us ; not attributing anything that befalls us to the creature, but beholding all things in God, and considering them as coming infallibly from His hand, our own sin only excepted.

Mme. Guyon.

LEAVE God to order all thy ways
 And hope in Him whate'er betide,
 Thou'lt find Him in the evil days
 Thy all-sufficient strength and guide ;
 Who trusts in God's unchanging love,
 Builds on the rock that nought can move.

Sing, pray, and swerve not from His ways,
 But do thine own part faithfully ;
 Trust His rich promises of grace,
 So shall they be fulfilled in thee :
 God never yet forsook at need
 The soul that trusted Him indeed.

Lyra Germanica.

MONDAY

THE principal object of one who begins to make use of prayer should be to endeavour and resolve and dispose oneself, with all possible diligence, to conform his will to that of God. The more perfectly we practise this, the more shall we receive from our Lord, and the further shall we advance in this way. But if we err in the beginning, and desire that God would immediately do *our* will, and lead us according to our fancies, what firmness can our edifice have ?

St Teresa.

TRUE instruction is this : learning to will that things should happen as they do. And how do they happen ? As the appointer of them hath appointed.

Epictetus.

WHEN we say that we ought to resign and forsake all things, this is not to be taken in the sense that a man is neither to do nor to purpose anything ; for a man must always have something to do and to order so long as he liveth. But we are to understand by it that the union with God standeth not in any man's powers. For just as neither this thing nor that can bring about or further this union, so there is nothing which hath power to frustrate or hinder it, save the man himself with his self-will.

Theologia Germanica.

TUESDAY

THE heart is fixed by trusting. Seek then clearer apprehensions of the faithfulness and goodness of God, hearts more enlarged in the notion of free grace, and the absolute trust due to it ; thus shall they be more established and fixed in all the rollings and changings of the world. The firm and close cleaving unto God hath in it of the affection which is inseparable from this trust—love with faith ; and so a hatred of all ways and thoughts that alienate and estrange from God, that remove and unsettle the heart.

Archbp. Leighton.

NOTHING hath separated us from God but our own Will, or rather our own Will is our Separation from God. All the Disorder and Corruption and Malady of our Nature, lies in a certain Fixedness of our own Will, Imagination and Desire, wherein we live to ourselves, are our own Centre and Circumference, act wholly from ourselves, according to our own Will, Imagination, and Desires. There is not the smallest Degree of Evil in us, but what arises from this Selfishness, because we are thus All in All to ourselves. It is this Self that our Saviour calls upon us to deny ; it is this Life of Self that we are to hate and to lose that the Kingdom of God may arise in us, that is, that God's Will may be done in us.

William Law.

WEDNESDAY

IF a man loves himself, perverse pride, head and source of every ill, lives in him. If he is lover of himself alone—that is, if he loves himself for his own sake and not for God—he cannot do other than ill, and all virtue is dead in him. Such an one is like a woman who brings forth her sons dead. And so he really is ; for he has not had the life of charity in himself, and has cared only for praise and self-glory, and not for the name of God.

St Catherine of Siena.

YOU desire always to forget yourself in order to give yourself to others ; but this forgetfulness tends to make you both your own idol, and that of all for whom you appear to forget yourself. Here is the depth of refined self-worship, which God would tear from you.

Fénelon.

A MAN must make continual efforts before his outward man can be drawn away from the love of perishable things. For this vice has struck its hidden roots so deeply into the animal nature of man that he seeks himself in all things,—in his words and works, in his dealings with others, and in his friendships ; nay the miserable self-seeking of nature works in secret even as regards God.

Tauler.

THURSDAY

I CAN vouch that our uncertainty as to the will of God, in regard to ourselves, vanishes gradually, in proportion as we seek it and desire it with all our faculties, and regulate all our acts and conduct to that end.

Saint Martin.

YOU may ask, if the soul be so intimately united with the will of God, how can she be deceived, since she never desires to do her own will in anything? I answer that if the soul were always united to the will of God, it is clear she could never perish. But the devil comes with deep artifices, and under the appearance of good, unhinges her, by making her notice some small things relating to herself, and turning her attention to certain other matters which he makes her believe are not bad; and thus by little and little he begins to darken the understanding, and cool the will, and breed self-love in her, till by one thing and another he withdraws her from God's will, and unites her to his own.

St Teresa.

I WOULD much rather that things should be as they are, for I esteem what God wills to be better than what I will, I give myself up, a servant and a follower, to him. I pursue. I desire, in short I will along with him.

Epictetus.

FRIDAY

THIS, and this alone is the true Kingdom of God opened in the Soul, when stripped of all Selfishness, it has only one Love and one Will in it, when it has no Motion or Desire, but what branches from the Love of God and resigns itself wholly to the Will of God. There is nothing Evil, or the Cause of Evil to either Man or Devil, but his own Will ; there is nothing Good in itself, but the Will of God : he therefore who wholly renounces his own Will, turns away from all Evil ; and he who gives himself up wholly to the Will of God, puts himself in the Possession of all that is good. *William Law.*

THE beginning of the true interior cross of Jesus is the sincere desire of a whole-hearted return to Him. For we are mistaken in thinking that the adversities and tribulations which the world causes, are the true cross of Jesus : no, they are not that, although they are crosses : His true cross consists in inward penitence, in continually dying to the flesh, the will, and the earthly love of self and of all creatures, in order to live in the spirit ; in the imitation of the meekness and humility of heart of Jesus. *Le Mystère de la Croix.*

SATURDAY

CHOOSE, and let no other kinds of reasoning draw you aside ; for no one can improve while he is wavering.

Epictetus.

THE immediate union of our wills with God is a work which can be accomplished only by the firm and constant resolution of those who desire it ; and there is no other means for this but the persevering use of a pure will, aided by the works and practice of every virtue, fertilized by prayer that divine grace may come to help our weakness, and lead us to the term of our regeneration. This will is the true property of man : God Himself seems to respect it, since, when He came to bring us the good tidings, the most He did was, through the angels, to wish us a good will ; and we see that His property is, not to go farther than menaces and promises, leaving it to man to make use of either, as he likes.

Saint Martin.

WHOSOEVER refuses nothing in the ordering of God, and who seeks nothing outside that ordering, will never end a day without having had a share in the cross of Christ.

Fénelon.

Fifth Sunday after Easter

OF a truth venial sin does not altogether upset the main resolution of charity, to love God above all things ; but it draws us dangerously from the Creator to the creature, and leads us to linger too much about earthly things, although we do not altogether forsake those which are heavenly. It hinders without wholly turning aside, and creature love will never be destroyed by it.

St Francis de Sales.

FOR Thy eternal living wells
 None stain'd or wither'd shall come near :
 A fresh immortal green there dwells,
 And spotless white is all the wear.

Dear, secret Greenness ! nurst below !
 Tempests and windes and winter-nights,
 Vex not, that but one sees thee grow,
 That One made all these lesser lights. . . .

Then bless thy secret growth, nor catch
 At noise, but thrive unseen and dumb ;
 Keep clean, bear fruit, earn life, and watch,
 Till the white-winged Reapers come !

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

THERE are many people who say to our Lord :
I yield myself wholly to Thee without reserve ; but
 there are very few who practise this abandonment.

St Francis de Sales.

WHEN both the appetites of the body, and the highest intellectual powers of the soul are trained and bound down, each in its own place, so that neither the senses, nor the will, nor any faculty is left too free and too proud, but they are at all times controlled and trained into due rightful order under the Divine will ; and man's desire at all times and in all things is to be, by help and grace of God, to the utmost of his power outwardly and inwardly obedient to the Divine Will, without contradiction, in all that the Eternal God, our Heavenly Father, has determined in His eternal divine counsels,—then may the Father of Heaven truly and absolutely accomplish His divine and mysterious work without any hindrance.

Tauler.

IF we put many hindrances in the way, and take no pains whatever to remove them, how can He come to us, and how can we have any desire that He should shew us His great mercies ?

St Teresa.

TUESDAY

IT is to no purpose to say, look to God, unless you also teach how we are to look to Him. For what hinders, someone may say, but that a man may look to God who does not abstain from any one pleasure, and who suffers his anger to be without any restraint ; such a one recollecting indeed the name of God, but being held in bondage by all the passions, and not at all endeavouring to expel them ? Virtue therefore, indeed proceeding to its perfection, and being ingenerated in the soul in conjunction with wisdom, will present God to the view. But to speak of God without true virtue is to utter nothing but a name.

Plotinus.

ALL false religion has its origin in taking God at second hand,—in stopping short of a personal conscious meeting with Him in our spirits—in allowing anything, whether of Divine appointment or human invention, to stand between God and us.

Erskine of Linlathen.

I WILL account no sinne little ; since there is not the least, but workes out the death of the soule. It is all one, whether I be drowned in the ebber shore, or in the midst of the deepe Sea.

Bishop Hall.

WEDNESDAY

THE humble soul, which has freely uprooted with eager love the root of Pride, has annulled its own will, seeking ever the honour of God and the salvation of souls. *St Catherine of Siena.*

DOES virtue consist in purifying, or in the being perfectly purified? Virtue, while in the act of purifying, is more imperfect than that which consists in complete purification, which is now, as it were the end. But to be perfectly purified, is an oblation of every thing foreign. Good, however, is something else besides this. *Plotinus.*

THEY who are in the love of truth either for the sake of glory in the world, or for the sake of glory in heaven, cannot shine in heaven; because they are not delighted and affected with the very light of heaven, but with the light of the world; and this light without the other, is in heaven dense darkness. For the glory of self predominates, because it is the end in view; and when that glory is the end, man regards himself in the first place, and the truths, which are subservient to his own glory, he regards only as means to that end. For this reason he turns away his sight, which is of his understanding and faith, from heaven to the world, and from the Lord to himself. *Swedenborg.*

Ascension Day

“**T**OSSE up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
And let the Prince of glorie enter in !” . . .

Out leap the antique patriarchs, all in haste,
To see the powers of Hell in triumph led,
And with small starres a garland interchased
Of olive-leaves they bore, to crowne His Head,
That was before with thornes deglorièd :
After them flewe the prophets brightly stoled
In shining lawne, and wimpled manifold.
Striking their ivorie harpes strung all in chords of
gold.

Nor can the martyrs' wounds them stay behind,
But out they rush among the heav'nly crowd,
Seeking their heav'n out of their heav'n to find,
Sounding their silver trumpets out so loude,
That the shrill noise broke through the starrie cloude,
And all the virgin soules, in pure arraie
Came dancing forth, and making joyous play :
So Him they lead along into the courts of day.

So him they lead into the courts of day,
Where never warre nor wounds abide Him more ;
But in that house eternal peace doth play,
Acquiating the soules that newe before
Their way to heav'n through their own blood did
score,
But now, estrangèd from all miserie,
As farre as heav'n and earth discoasted lie,
Swelter in quiet waves of immortality.

Giles Fletcher.

FRIDAY AFTER ASCENSION

LORD JESUS ! with what sweetness and delights,
 Sure holy hopes, high joys, and quickning
 flights,

Dost thou feed thine ! O thou ! the hand that lifts
 To him who gives all good and perfect gifts
 Thy glorious bright Ascension, though remov'd
 So many Ages from me, is so prov'd
 And by thy Spirit seal'd to me, that I
 Feel me a sharer in thy victory !

I soar and rise

Up to the skies,

Leaving the world their day ;

And in my flight

For the true light

Go seeking all the way ; . . .

With these fair thoughts I move in this fair place,
 And the last steps of my milde Master trace.

I see him leading out his chosen Train

All sad with tears, which like warm Summer rain

In silent drops steal from their holy eyes,

Fix'd lately on the Cross, now on the skies.

And now, eternal Jesus ! thou dost heave

Thy blessed hands to bless those thou dost leave.

The cloud doth now receive thee, and their sight

Having lost thee, behold two men in white !

Two and no more : *what two attest is true,*

Was thine own answer to the stubborn Jew.

Come then, thou faithful witness ! come, dear Lord,

Upon the Clouds again to judge this world.

Henry Vaughan.

SATURDAY AFTER ASCENSION

WHEN a soul is purified by love of God, illumined by wisdom, stablished by the might of God, then is the eye of the soul opened to behold spiritual things, as virtues, and angels, and holy souls, and heavenly things.

Richard Rolle.

MOREOVER He gave special understanding and teaching of working of miracles, as thus :—*It is known that I have done miracles here afore, many and diverse, high and marvellous, worshipful and great. And so as I have done, I do now continually, and shall do in coming of time.* It is known that afore miracles come sorrow and anguish and tribulation ; and that is for that we should know our own feebleness and our mischiefs that we are fallen in by sin, to meeken us and make us to dread God and cry for help and grace. Miracles come after that, and they come of the high Might, Wisdom and Goodness of God, shewing His virtue and the joys of Heaven so far as it may be in this passing life : and that to strengthen our faith and to increase our hope, in charity. Wherefore it pleaseth Him to be known and worshipped in miracles. Then signifieth He thus : He willeth that we be not borne over low for sorrow and tempests that fall to us : for it hath even so been afore miracle-coming.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

Sunday after Ascension Day

IT is man's love which makes his intention, and which determines his internal sight. Thus the love of self turns it to self and its objects ; the love of the world to worldly objects ; and the love of heaven to heavenly objects. *Swedenborg.*

SOME there are who continually dwell upon useless thoughts, almost without knowing what they are about. They are attentive only by inadvertence, and do not seek to cogitate. Others study, and laboriously heap up vanity, but there are few who really meditate with a view to kindling heavenly love within their souls. Thought and study may be bestowed on all manner of things, but the real meditation of which I am speaking has reference only to such matters as are calculated to make us earnest and devout. Practically, meditation is simply thought, attentive, repeated or sustained, with a view to excite the will to holy affections and resolutions.

St Francis de Sales.

FREEDOM always tends to rise upwards, carried aloft by desire. For the soul has received from God the supreme boon of never being able to find rest in any creature. *Ruysbroek.*

MONDAY

THE more the Self, the I, the Me, the Mine, that is, self-seeking and selfishness, abate in a man, the more doth God's I, that is God Himself, increase in him.

Theologia Germanica.

WHAT profits it that He is risen,
 If dead in sins thou yet dost lie ?
 If yet thou cleavest to thy prison,
 What profit that He dwells on high ?
 His triumph will avail thee nought,
 If thou hast ne'er the battle fought.

Lyra Germanica.

HE who does not love God, and who dies in the cold of lovelessness will shiver everlastingly with an endless cold in the depths of his being. He will be frozen by having despised the true love ; he will be scorched by having adored the false love. The ice calls, the ice answers. The fire calls, the fire answers.

Ruysbroek.

TUESDAY

DUST and clay,
 Man's antient wear,
 Here you must stay,
 But I elsewhere !
 Souls sojourn here, but may not rest ;
 Who will ascend must be undrest.

And yet some,
 That know to die
 Before death come,
 Walk to the skie
 Even in this life ; but all such can
 Leave behinde them the old Man.

Henry Vaughan.

NO man loveth Thee, but he who sees Thee ; and
 no man sees Thee, but he who loves Thee.

St Augustine.

HE who seeks and perceives God in everything, no-
 one can prevent his being solitary, among all
 multitudes and multiplicity. Divine union accom-
 panies solitude. The righteous man lives in an
 invincible withdrawal ; and since all the multiplicities
 of the universe cannot trouble God, so, in due
 proportion, the righteous man united to God cannot
 be ruffled by them.

Ruysbroek.

WEDNESDAY

THINK on these things. The English translation abates of the emphasis that is in the Greek ; for if you read them according to the Greek, it is : *in the use of your reason, mind, and understanding, think these things to be reasonable : in the exercise of your natural faculties, charge yourself with these things.* It is not barely, *have them in your thoughts ; but, in the use of your reason, recommend all these things to yourself.* Think that you do not acquit yourself : that you do not that that becomes you ; that you do not raise a connatural superstructure to the foundation of nature ; if you do not, in the reason of your mind, think all these things worthy of you. *Whichcote.*

THERE is no true life but the life of faith. O Lord, let me live out of the World with Thee, if Thou wilt, but let me not live in the World without Thee. *Bishop Hall.*

THE will itself is governed by that love which rules it and shapes it. Now the Love of God is supreme above all other loves, and that so entirely, that unless it holds sovereign sway it must perish altogether. *St Francis de Sales.*

THURSDAY

YOU must see nothing but God in all things, and accustom your soul to His Presence within you. Remember the moments when God has been present to you, in church, or in your own room, and shew yourself towards men and things in the same inward state. Such as you desire to be in church, in fervent prayer, such you should be among men and outward things.

Ruysbroek.

JUST in proportion as we dislodge the human life from its own centre, which is Self, it has a tendency, by the law of its own nature to seek the True Centre, which is God. But what is it for the human life to be loosened and dislodged from its own centre? It is to recognise in everything its entire dependence on God, and to be willing to receive everything in God's way, in God's time, and on God's conditions.

Mme. Guyon.

TO love God above ourselves is not indeed so properly to love Him above the salvation of our souls, as if those were distinct things: but it is to love Him above all our own sinful affections, and above our particular beings, and to conform ourselves to Him.

John Smith.

FRIDAY

IF then you attain to such simple filial trust in our Lord, abide therein, without seeking any activity, either of intellect or will ; for such loving confidence and slumber in the Saviour's Arms, combine above all whatever else you could possibly seek. Better far to sleep on that Dear Breast, than to wake under any other possible conditions. *St Francis de Sales.*

I LOVE my God, but with no love of mine,
 For I have none to give ;
 I love Thee, Lord : but all the love is Thine,
 For by Thy love I live.

Mme. Guyon.

I DESIRE to love Thee, O Lord. Increase Thou my desire, and give me that which I am desiring. Behold, I love Thee, and if it be too little, make it more. *St Augustine.*

SATURDAY

THE Eternal Word is so unutterably high to us inwardly, in the very principle of our being, that not even man himself, his own nature, his own thoughts, nor aught that can be named, or said, or understood, is so high or planted so deep within him, as the Eternal Word is in man. And it is ever speaking in man ; but he hears it not by reason of the sore deafness that has come upon him.

Tauler.

THE great sin and the great misery of man is the forgetting of God : and the great end and use of His works and of His word is to teach us the right remembrance and consideration of Him in all estates.

Archbp. Leighton.

OUR business does not consist in thinking, but in *loving much* ; do therefore whatever may excite you most to love. Perhaps we do not know what love is : and I do not wonder, for it consists not in having greater delights, but greater resolutions and desires of pleasing God in everything ; and in endeavouring, as much as possible, not to offend Him ; and in beseeching Him that He would promote the honour and glory of His Son.

St Teresa.

Whitsunday

WELLCOME, white day ! a thousand Suns,
Though seen at once, were black to thee !
For after their light darkness comes ;
But thine shines to eternity.

Those flames, which on the Apostles rush'd
At this great feast, and in a tyre
Of cloven Tongues their heads all brush'd,
And crown'd them with Prophetic fire.

Yet Thou the great eternal Rock
Whose height above all ages shines,
Art still the same, and canst unlock
Thy water to a soul that pines.

Since then Thou art the same this day
And ever as Thou wert of old,
And nothing doth Thy love allay
But our heart's dead and sinful cold :

As Thou long since wert pleas'd to buy
Our drown'd estate, taking the Curse
Upon Thy self, so to destroy
The knots we tyed upon Thy purse,

So let Thy grace now make the way
Even for Thy love ; for by that means
We, who are nothing but foul clay,
Shall be fine gold which Thou didst cleanse.

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

O LORD, communicate Thy light to our minds, Thy life to our souls : as Thou art original to us by the creation of us, so be Thou also final by our intention of Thee.

Whichcote.

THE greatest proof of the conjunction of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, is that He is said to have the same relation to God which the spirit in us has to each of us.

St Basil.

WORKING of miracles and gifts of healing are through the Holy Spirit. Demons were driven out by the Spirit of God. The devil was brought to naught by the presence of the Spirit. Remission of sins was by the gift of the Spirit, for "ye were washed, ye were sanctified . . . in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the holy Spirit of our God." There is close relationship with God through the Spirit, for "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." The resurrection from the dead is effected by the operation of the Spirit, for "Thou sendest forth Thy spirit, they are created ; and Thou renewest the face of the earth."

St Basil.

TUESDAY

ASK thee of God nothing but this gift of love, which is the Holy Ghost. For among all the gifts that our Lord giveth there is none so good, nor so profitable, so worthy, nor so excellent as this is. For there is no gift of God that is both the giver and the gift, but this gift of love ; and therefore it is the best and the worthiest. And that love is not the affection of love that is created in a soul, but it is the Holy Ghost Himself, that is, love uncreated, that saveth a soul. For He first giveth Himself to that soul before the soul loveth Him, and He formeth the affection in the soul, and maketh the soul to love Him only for Himself. And not only so, but also by this gift the soul loveth itself, and her neighbour as herself only for God. And this is the gift of love that maketh the distinction between chosen and reprobate souls. And this gift maketh perfect peace betwixt God and a soul, and uniteth all blessed creatures wholly in God ; for it maketh Jesus for to love us, and us Him also, and each of us to love one another in Him.

Walter Hilton.

I BELIEVE in the Holy Ghost. God is both a Spirit and holy ; but this name, personally taken, is peculiarly that of the third Person, proceeding from the Father and the Son, by a way that can neither be expressed nor conceived ; holy in Himself, and the author and cause of all holiness in us.

Archbp. Leighton.

WEDNESDAY

THE souls wherein the Spirit dwells, illuminated by the Spirit, themselves become spiritual, and send forth their grace to others. *St Basil.*

THIS is the love of God which thou shouldest covet and desire ; for this love is God Himself, and the Holy Ghost. This love uncreated when it is given to us, it worketh in our souls all that good is, and all that belongeth to goodness. This love loveth us before we love Him, for it cleanseth us first from our sins, it maketh us to love Him, maketh our wills strong to withstand all sins, and stirreth us up to exercise ourselves through divers exercises both bodily and ghostly in all virtues. It stirreth us up also to forsake sin and carnal affections, and worldly fears. It keepeth us from malicious temptations of the enemy, and driveth us out from business and vanities of the world, and from the conversation of worldly lovers. All this doth the uncreated love of God, when He giveth Himself to us ; we do right nought but suffer Him, and assent to Him, for that is the most that we do to assent willingly to His gracious working in us. And yet is not that will from and of ourselves, but of His making, so that methinketh He doth in us all that is well done, and yet we see it not.

Walter Hilton.

THURSDAY

AND art Thou grieved, sweet and sacred Dove,
When I am sowre,
And crosse thy love ?
Grieved for me ? the God of strength and power
Griev'd for a worm, which when I tread,
I passe away and leave it dead ?

Then weep, mine eyes, the God of love doth grieve :
Weep, foolish heart,
And weeping live ;
For death is drie as dust. Yet if ye part,
End as the night, whose sable hue
Your sinnes expresse ; melt into dew.

Lord, I adjudge myself to tears and grief,
Ev'n endlesse tears
Without relief.

If a cleare spring for me no time forbears,
But runnes, although I be not drie ;
I am no Crystall, what shall I ?

Yet if I wail not still, since still to wail
Nature denies ;
And flesh would fail,

If my deserts were masters of mine eyes :
Lord, pardon, for Thy Sonne makes good
My want of tears with store of bloud.

George Herbert.

FRIDAY

WE know that this Holy Trinity co-operates in the work of our salvation ; the Father hath given us His Son : and the Son hath sent us His Spirit : and the Spirit gives us faith, which unites us to the Son, and through Him to the Father ; the Father ordained our redemption, the Son wrought it, the Holy Spirit reveals and applies it.

Archbp. Leighton.

ONLY after a man is purified from the shame whose stain he took through his wickedness, and has come back again to his natural beauty, and as it were cleaning the Royal Image and restoring its ancient form, only thus is it possible for him to draw near to the Paraclete. Through His aid hearts are lifted up, the weak are held by the hand, and they who are advancing are brought to perfection. Shining upon those that are cleansed from every spot, he makes them spiritual by fellowship with Himself.

St Basil.

THERE is no sanctification without the Spirit. The powers of the heavens are not holy by nature ; were it so, there would in this respect be no difference between them and the Holy Spirit. It is in proportion to their relative excellence that they have their meed of holiness from the Spirit.

St Basil.

SATURDAY

WE must never allow ourselves to form our opinions in such a way that we will not willingly change them when necessary, whether we have been obliged or not to form them. To be liable to depend on our own judgment, and to seek for suitable reasons in the support of what we have understood and approved, is quite natural ; but to give oneself up to them, and be bound by them is a notable imperfection.

St Francis de Sales.

GRACE is a divine light in the soul, and shews the true colours of things. The apostle overshoots not, when he saith *The spiritual man judgeth all things*. He hath undeniably the advantage : he may judge of natural things, but the natural man cannot judge of spiritual things : yea the truest judgment of natural things, in respect to our chiefest end, springs particularly from spiritual wisdom ; that makes the true parallel of things, and gives a just account of their differences as here.

Archbp. Leighton.

Trinity Sunday

GOD, the blessed Trinity, which is everlasting Being, right as He is endless from without beginning, right so it was in His purpose endless, to make Mankind. Which fair Kind first was prepared to His own Son, the Second Person. And when He would, by full accord of all the Trinity, He made us all at once; and in our making He knit us, and oned us to Himself: by which oneing we are kept as clear and as noble as we were made. And thus is our making, God, Almighty, is our Nature's Father; and God, All-Wisdom, is our Nature's Mother: with the Love and the Goodness of the Holy Ghost: which is all one God, one Lord. In our Father Almighty we have our keeping and our bliss as anent our natural Substance, which is to us by our making, without beginning. And in the Second Person in skill and wisdom we have our keeping as anent our Sense-soul: our restoring and our saving; for He is our Mother, Brother, and Saviour. And in our good Lord, the Holy Ghost, we have our rewarding and our meed-giving for our living and our travail, and endless overpassing of all that we desire, in this marvellous courtesy, of His high plenteous grace. For all our life is in *three*: in the first we have our Being, in the second we have our Increasing, and in the third we have our Fulfilling: the first is Nature, the second is Mercy, and the third is Grace.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

MONDAY

CHANGER of all things, yet immutable ;
 Before and after all, the first and last ;
 That, moving all, is yet immoveable ;
 Great without quantitie ; in Whose forecast
 Things past are present, things to come are past ;
 Swift without motion ; to Whose open eye
 The hearts of wicked men unbreasted lie ;
 At once absent and present to them, farre and nigh.
Giles Fletcher.

THOUGH God be single and indivisible (and He is so), yet human error divides Him with its idle words into many parts. Each man counts that his highest good which he loves most. Now one loves this, another loves something else ; so that what a man most loves is his god. In dividing their god therefore into so many parts, they find neither God Himself nor that part of the Good which they love more. When they make the Godhead into one separate whole they neither have Him altogether nor the part they have taken from Him. So no man finds what he seeks, for he seeks it in the wrong way. Ye seek what ye cannot find, when ye seek all that is Good in one form of Good.
Boethius.

TUESDAY

I AM of opinion that the working of the Father and of the Son takes place as well in saints as in sinners, in rational beings and in dumb animals ; nay even in those things which are without life, and in all things universally which exist ; but the operation of the Holy Spirit does not take place at all in those things which are without life, or in those which, although living, are yet dumb ; nay is not found even in those who are endued indeed with reason, but are engaged in evil courses, and not at all converted to a better life. In those persons alone do I think that the operation of the Holy Spirit takes place, who are already turning to a better life, and walking along the way which leads to Jesus Christ, *i.e.* who are engaged in the performance of good actions, and who abide in God. That the working of the Father and the Son operates both in saints and sinners is manifest from this, that all who are rational beings are partakers of the word, *i.e.* of reason, and by this means bear certain seeds implanted within them of wisdom and justice, which is Christ. Now in Him who truly exists, and who said by Moses, "I am that I am," all things, whatever they are, participate : which participation in God the Father is shared both by just men and sinners, by rational and irrational beings, and by all things universally which exist.

Origen.

WEDNESDAY

MYSTERIES marking these Persons distinctively :

One by nature, all and any,
Neither is separately less than all the Three.
Equal in all Three is knowledge, power and will,
Yet in their Three Persons is there difference still :
—Equal reverence to the Three,
To the One all glory be.

Adam of St Victor.

GRANT unto our minds, O Lord, that they may rise up to Thee through the hardships of this world, and from these troubles come to Thee, and that with the eyes of our mind opened we may behold the noble fountain of all good things, even Thee. Grant us health for our minds' eyes, that we may fasten them upon Thee, and scatter the mist that now hangeth before our minds' sight, and let Thy light lighten our eyes ; for Thou art the Brightness of the True Light. Thou art the comfortable resting-place of the righteous, and Thou enablest them to see Thee. Thou art the Beginning and the End of all things. Thou bearest up all things without effort. Thou art the Way and the Guide, and the Bourne whither the Way leadeth ; to Thee all men are hastening.

Boethius.

THURSDAY

THE first principle of existing things is One, creating through the Son, and perfecting through the Spirit. The operation of the Father who worketh all in all is not imperfect, neither is the creating work of the Son incomplete if not perfected by the Spirit. The Father, who creates by His sole will, could not stand in any need of the Son, but nevertheless He wills through the Son; nor could the Son, who works according to the likeness of the Father, need co-operation, but the Son too wills to make perfect through the Spirit. *St Basil.*

TO have God in our sight, and to have right apprehension of Him doth, above all things, tend to the nobleness, amplitude and freedom of our spirits; for this we observe, that *the greatness of an object, and the excellency of the act of any agent about a transcendent object, doth mightily tend to the enlargement and improvement of his faculties.* Whereas those who are employed in mean businesses, and are conversant about *little objects* have nothing in them that is excellent, but are of limited and narrow spirits. *Whichcote.*

FRIDAY

THUS fitly and consistently do we behold the “Brightness of the glory” of God by means of the illumination of the Spirit, and by means of the “Express Image” we are led up to Him of whom He is the Express Image and Seal, graven to the like.

St Basil.

GOD draws minds to Himself by His sovereign Beauty and inconceivable Goodness, which combine to make One Supreme Divinity of Infinite Perfection. All creation is designed for goodness and beauty; all things tend thereto. Goodness and beauty are desirable and attractive to all, and whatever has power to will or to act is influenced thereby. It is the property of beauty to attract and call all things to itself, and therefore the Greeks describe it by a word the root of which is *to call*. So again the true symbol of good is light, the property of which is to absorb all things into itself. Even so goodness assimilates all with itself, being not merely sovereign unity, but supremely unifying, inasmuch as all things acknowledge and seek it as their beginning, preservation, and end. Practically indeed, beauty and goodness are one and the same thing. Even so God, the Father of Light, the Sovereign Good and Beauty, attracts man’s understanding to contemplate Him by His Beauty, while His Goodness wins him to love.

St Francis de Sales.

SATURDAY

WE ought with all our might to inquire about God, that we may know what He is. Though it be beyond our power to know what He is, yet we must try to know, according to the measure of the understanding He giveth us. Every creature, both reasoning and unreasoning, declares that God is eternal, for never would so many creatures and so mighty and so fair have bowed themselves to a lesser creature and a lesser power than themselves, nor even to one equally great.

Boethius.

GOD is not in a certain place, so as to desert other things ; but wherever any thing is able to come into contact with Him, there He is present. Hence, as in other things, it is not possible to perceive something intellectually, while understanding and attending to another thing ; thus, it is not possible for the soul to perceive God, while it retains the impression of something else, and energizes according to that impression. Nor again, is it possible for the soul, while occupied and detained by other things, to be impressed with the form of something contrary to them.

Plotinus.

First Sunday after Trinity

AH, my deare Lord ! what couldst thou spye
 In this impure, rebellious clay,
 That made thee thus resolve to dye
 For those that kill thee every day ?

O what strange wonders could thee move
 To slight thy precious bloud, and breath ?
 Sure it was Love, my Lord ; for Love
 Is only stronger far than death !

Henry Vaughan.

GOD is in all that He does, and in all that He makes or sustains, and God is Love. Therefore in truth, every event in providence, and every work of creation, is full of holy love, because they are full of God. The fall of man, the corruption of his nature, consists in his blindness to this element of love which pervades and fills all things. He sees the things, but he does not see love in them, and that love is truly their character and essence, because it is the character and essence of Him who is their cause and their fountain. The great practical difficulty is to believe constantly that God is really love, and that it is with Him that we have to do in everything.

Erskine of Linlathen.

MONDAY

SOMETIMES union is accomplished without any co-operation of ours save a simple yielding to Divine Goodness. So again, we co-operate, when, being drawn, we run willingly after the Loving Power, which draws and binds us by the strength of love. Another time we seem to begin pressing close to God before He draws near to us, because we feel the movement on our own side, and do not feel that of God, which nevertheless is continually preventing us, although we are often unconscious of it. For verily, did He not unite Himself to us, we could never unite ourselves to Him ; he chooses and claims us before we choose or claim Him. But when, following His imperceptible drawings, we begin to unite ourselves to Him, He sometimes speeds our progress, strengthening our weakness, and drawing so near to us that we seem to feel Him entering in, and filling our heart with untold sweetness. Sometimes, again, His aid is given as insensibly as His first drawing, and we, knowing not how so mighty an union was made, only knowing that we had no power of ourselves to make it, are led to believe that a Hidden Power has wrought insensibly in us.

St Francis de Sales.

TUESDAY

GOD is Love, yea, all Love, and so all Love that nothing but Love can come from Him ; and the Christian Religion is nothing else but an open full Manifestation of His universal Love towards all Mankind.

William Law.

GOD is Love : He writes not injuries in Marble, His Law indeed He writes in stone, aye, but the breach of the Law, He writes that in the dust. All the wrong hath been done to Him, and yet He beseeches us to be reconciled ; He's far more ready to offer mercy than the Creature is to embrace it ; and more willing to speak peace, than man is to heare it.

Culverwel.

WHAT better friendship than to cover shame ?
 What greater love than for a friend to die ?
 Yet this is better, to assell the blame ;
 And this is greater, for anemie :
 But more than this, to die, not suddenly,
 Nor with some common death, or easie paine,
 But slowly, and with torments to be slaine ;
 O depth without a depth, farre better seene, than
 sayen.

Giles Fletcher.

WEDNESDAY

THE soul is governed by its virtues, and of these love, as Chief, rules and adapts all others, not merely in right of being first, but because God, having created man in His own Image and Likeness, wills that he should be all love, even as He is.

St Francis de Sales.

YET nought Thou ask'st in lieu of all this love,
 But love of us for guerdon of Thy paine.
 Ay me : what can us lesse than that behove ?
 Had He required life of us againe,
 Had it been wrong to aske His owne with gaine ?
 He gave us life, He it restored lost ;
 Then life were least, that us so little cost.

But He our life hath left unto us free,
 Free that was thrall, and blessed that was ban'd ;
 Ne ought demands, but that we loving be,
 As He Himselfe hath lov'd us afore hand,
 And bound thereto with an eternall band,
 Him first to love, that us so dearely bought,
 And next, our brethren to His image wrought.

Spenser.

THURSDAY

THUS Christ Himself to watch and sorrow gives,
 While dew'd in heavie sleepe, dead Peter lies :
 Thus man in his owne grave securely lives,
 While Christ alive, with thousand horrors dies,
 Yet more for theirs than His owne pardon cries :
 · No sinnes He had, yet all our sinnes He bare ;
 · So much doth God for others' evils care,
 And yet so careless men for their own evils are.

Giles Fletcher.

TOWARDS sinners, Thou art most patient ;
 towards penitents, Thou art most pitiful.
 Thou art ever the same, eternal, sempiternal, im-
 mortal and unchangeable God, Whom neither space
 can dilate, nor littleness of place can straiten, nor any
 receptacle can keep in or constrain, nor the will vary,
 nor partiality corrupt. From Whom neither forget-
 fulness takes anything, neither doth memory restore
 any thing ; neither do things past pass away ; nor
 future things succeed. To Whom neither the first
 gave beginning : nor the continuance of time in-
 crease : nor shall any accident give it any end.

St Augustine.

FRIDAY

O LORD ! what loving care Thou hast day and night of man, who knows nothing of himself, and knows even less of Thee, although Thou lovest him to such a degree as to seek him with great diligence, and though Thy love makes Thee wait for him and bear with him with exceeding patience ! Thou art the great and high God, of Whom we know not how to speak, and Whom we cannot understand because of the ineffable majesty of Thy greatness, Thy power, Thine infinite wisdom and goodness : and Thou dost employ all these attributes in favour of that vile man whom Thou willest to make great and worthy ; and to arrive at this, Thou dost take him always by love, not willing to force him, because of the free will Thou hast given him. Thou dost draw men by love, and dost will that they should correspond by love. Thou dost act in them and upon them by love ; and Thou willest that the entire man should work likewise by love, for without love no good is wrought. Thou dost work solely for the service of man, and Thou dost will that man should work wholly for Thy honour, and not for his own service.

St Catherine of Genoa.

SATURDAY

WHILE our Saviour's Redemption is applied to us in as many different ways as there are souls to be saved, still love is the one universal channel of redemption, without which it can never be applied. And so the gates of the earthly paradise were kept by the cherubim with the flaming sword, that we might learn how there is no entrance into the heavenly Paradise save to him who is transfixed by the sword of Love. Therefore it is that the Dear Lord Who bought us with His Blood so greatly desires that we love Him in order to our eternal salvation ; and that we attain that eternal salvation so as to love Him eternally ; His Love effecting our salvation, that salvation His Love.

St Francis de Sales.

THE veiles of the Law were veiles of obscurity, but the veiles of the Gospel are only to allay the brightness of it. 'Tis honour enough for a Christian, if he can but touch the hem of Evangelical Mysteries, for he will never see a full Commentary upon the Gospel till he can behold the naked face of his God.

Culverwel.

Second Sunday after Trinity

LET us be content with following, without looking any further, all the light that is given to us from one moment to another. This is our daily bread ; God only gives it for the day. It is our manna : whoever tries to gather a double portion and to make provision for the morrow, grossly abuses it. It will turn bad in his hands ; he cannot eat more than he who only gathered for his day's need.

Fénelon.

YET since man is a very brute,
And after all thy Acts of grace doth kick,
Slighting that health thou gav'st when he was sick,
Be not displeas'd, if I, who have a sute
To thee each houre, beg at thy door
For this one more ;
O plant in me thy Gospel, and thy Law,
Both Faith, and Awe ;
So twist them in my heart, that ever there
I may as well as Love, find too thy fear ?

Henry Vaughan.

218 SECOND WEEK AFTER TRINITY

MONDAY

A CHRISTIAN must be born of Christ, he must have a Christian Will and desire, and lead a Christian Conversation. It is not only knowing will do it, and comforting oneself with Christ's sufferings, and be a dissembling Hypocrite in the presence of God ; to speak one thing, and will, desire and do another ; and let the evil poisonous worm of the corrupt Nature's Fire, burn still, and be but a Lip, or Mouth Christian. It lyeth not in knowing much, that a man should tickle himself with Christ's sufferings, and set them aloft on the Pinnacle, and yet retain the evil envious-kindled poisonous worm continually in the Heart, and continually carry fuel to its fire ; I say, that very Mantle will become hellish fire to many, that he hath known God's will, and will not enter thereinto, and give up himself to Him. A Christian must break his own natural Will, and give himself up into God's Will, he must continually bring all the thoughts of his mind into the Obedience of God, into the Love and Mercy of God in Christ, into His becoming Man, Suffering, Dying, Death, and Resurrection ; he must will nothing but God's Will in Christ. But this is his Desire, that God may be his Will and Deed, that God in him may be his knowledge ; he should continually slay the will of his Flesh, and desire only God's Will in himself : that it may rule, drive, and be the Deed in him.

Jacob Behmen.

TUESDAY

O LOVING Lord, Thou never leavest those who leave not Thee ; Thou never takest away Thy Gifts save from those who withdraw their hearts from Thee.

St Francis de Sales.

WHILE we strive against sin, we may safely expect that the Divinity itself will strive with us, and derive that strength and power into us that shall at last make us more than conquerors. God hath not forsaken the earth : but as His almighty essence runs through all things, sustaining and upholding the frame of the whole universe ; so more especially does it bear up in its almighty arms those things that are more nearly related to Himself, always cherishing them with His own goodness. Wheresoever God beholds any breathings after Himself, He gives life to them, as those which are His own breath in them. As he who projects wickedness shall be sure to find Satan standing at his right hand ready to assist him in it : so he that pursues after God and holiness, shall find God nearer to him than he is to himself, in the free and liberal communications of Himself to him.

John Smith.

WEDNESDAY

BY how much the more a man is fixed in the old Adam, by so much the more it seems impossible to him, and by so much the less can he believe that he can become righteous. So long as a man does any thing violently against his own conscience, whether it be of small or of great moment, yet he cannot get forwards. He that is a transgressor in one sin, is guilty of all sins. If any one consenteth to one temptation, all the rest present themselves, and desire to gain that man, as being him, upon whom they have gotten a new right or claim.

Matthew Weyer.

NO work done without the Will of God can reach the Kingdom of God ; it is all but an unprofitable Imagery, or self-wrought Work. For Nothing is pleasing to God, but what He Himself doth by the Will, as His Instrument. For there is but one only God in the Essence of all Essences, and all That which worketh with Him in that Essence is one Spirit with Him ; but that which worketh in itself, in its own Will is in itself out of His Dominion. It is indeed under that universal Dominion of Nature whereby He holdeth subject to Him every Life evil and good, but not under that special Divine Government in Himself, which comprehendeth the Good only. *Nothing is Divine, which walketh and worketh not in the Will of God.*

Jacob Behmen.

THURSDAY

THAT rule that is common, *every man for himself, and God for us all*: it is the effect of the lowest, the shallowest, the meanest, sorriest spirit that is in the whole creation of God: and that frame and temper of mind doth make a man incapable of self-enjoyment. *Whichcote.*

WHATSOEVER good we do, what progress soever we make, we are entirely obliged to the Holy Ghost for the same. So that if we are converted from sin, it is by His grace; if we embrace virtue, it is He that brings us to it; if we persevere in it, it is by His assistance; if, in short, we one day receive the reward He has promised, it is He Himself that gives it us: for which reason S: Augustine says very well, *God rewards His own benefits when He rewards our services*. So that one favour procures us another, and one mercy is only a step to the obtaining of another. The holy patriarch Joseph thought it not enough to give his brothers the corn they went to buy in Egypt, but ordered his servants to put the money they brought to pay for it into the very mouth of the sack: God in some measure does the same with the elect, for He gives them not only eternal life, but grace and a good life to purchase it.

St Luis of Granada.

FRIDAY

GOD respecteth a shivered, Broken, Contrite and sighing heart, that is afraid of His wrath, that would always fain do well, that always desireth God and goodness, that co-worketh with God ; for what the Mind is desirous of, that it receiveth, be it necessity or Death, or else the Kingdom of God ; for the Kingdom of God is not far off, but within us, we must become born of God, if we will see God, or receive God's Will.

Jacob Behmen.

THE Servant : Lord, I should like to hear about the union of pure reason with the Holy Trinity, when in the true reflection of the Eternal Birth of the Word, and the regeneration of its own spirit, it is ravished out of itself and divested of all means.

Eternal Wisdom : He ought not to ask after what is the highest in doctrine, who still stands on what is lowest in a good life. I will teach thee what will profit thee more.

The Servant : Lord, what wilt Thou teach me ?

Eternal Wisdom : I will teach thee to die, and will teach thee to live. I will teach thee to receive me lovingly, and will teach thee to praise me lovingly. Behold, this is what properly appertains to thee.

Suso.

SATURDAY

WE are quite willing to be consumed all at once by the flames of pure love ; but this rapid destruction would cost us hardly anything. It is excess of self-love which desires to be made perfect so suddenly and so cheaply. *Fénelon.*

IF we ever are willing to become proficient, we must bear one with another, as God also hath borne with us, and still bears with us, and even as others also do bear with us. Yet it is chiefly to be endeavoured that we daily become less and less troublesome unto others, and being accepted of God, we should have soundness of conscience. We ought to be brethren, and not accuse, defame, or condemn one another for any shame or spot. And if any one cannot do, or have this from the very foundation, yet he ought to suppress these things in himself, and to have a care lest they break forth again : and then will the conscience be endued with no bitterness, and the state of the man will be well. *Matthew Weyer.*

Third Sunday after Trinity

TO think that we shall enter heaven without praying, and entering into ourselves by the knowledge of ourselves and the consideration of our own misery, and what we owe to God, and by often imploring His mercy, is foolishness. Our Lord Himself has said, "No one can come to the Father, but by Me," and elsewhere He says, "He that seeth Me, seeth the Father also." Now, if we never look at Him, nor consider how much we owe Him, nor the death He suffered for us, I do not understand how we can know Him, or perform works in His service ; for what value can faith have without these, and what worth can these have, if not united with the merits of Christ ? Neither do I know who can excite us to love this Lord. May His Majesty be pleased to make us know how dearly we have cost Him, and that "the servant is not greater than his master," and that we must *work* in order to enjoy His glory, and for this reason we must pray likewise, that so we may not fall into temptation. *St Teresa.*

THIRD WEEK AFTER TRINITY 225

MONDAY

Concord - 1. 1. 1.
LET the soul go to prayer with courage, and with a pure, disinterested love ; not so much to receive anything from God, as to please Him and do His will ; not desiring to get joy of God, but only to be as He pleaseth.

Mme. Guyon.

WE must say therefore as follows, invoking God himself, not with external speech, but with the soul itself, extending ourselves in prayer to him, since we shall then be able to pray to him properly, when we approach by ourselves alone to the alone.

Plotinus.

BUT if in prayer, or out of it, thou shouldst willingly be diverted or distracted, suffering thyself deliberately to be transported into any other state of mind, then it will be good for thee to revert to God, and return into His Divine presence, renewing the purest acts of faith and resignation.

Molinos.

WE must never more entirely abandon ourselves to God, than when He appears to abandon us.

Fénelon.

TUESDAY

PRAYER still continues, though the imagination may ramble upon infinite numbers of thoughts, provided one consent not to it, shift not place [before God], intermit not the prayer, nor change the first intention of being with God. And it is certain that he changes it not, whilst he does not leave his place ; hence it follows in sound doctrine that one may persevere in prayer, though the imagination be carried about with various and involuntary thoughts. *He prays in spirit and in truth*, says St Thomas, *whoever goes to prayer with the spirit and intention of praying, though afterwards through misery and frailty his thoughts may straggle.* *Molinos.*

THIS only I demand of thee, that whatever thou hast seen in the world, and whatever struggles thou hast witnessed among men, thou shouldst transfer it to Me, and lay the burden of it on Me. This, as long as thou livest, shall be thy work and thy task ; of that which men seek there in the world, but find not—to wit, peace and joy—I will give thee abundance. *Comenius.*

WEDNESDAY

WHEN thou art either to do or suffer anything, when thou art about any purpose or business, go tell God of it, and acquaint Him with it ; yea, burden Him with it, and thou hast done for matter of caring : no more care, but quiet sweet diligence in thy duty, and dependence on Him for the carriage of thy matters. So thou rollest over all on Him, that is the very proper working of faith.

Archbp. Leighton.

HOW many have begun this happy practice of prayer and internal recollection, and have left it off, pretending that they felt no pleasure, that they lose time, that their thoughts trouble them, and that prayer is not for them, whilst they find not any sentiment of God, nor any ability to reason or discourse ; whereas they might have believed, been silent, and had patience ! All this is no more but with ingratitude to hunt after sensible pleasures, suffering themselves to be transported with self-love, seeking themselves, and not God, because they cannot suffer a little pain and dryness, without reflecting on the infinite loss they sustain ; whereas by the least act of reverence towards God, amidst dryness and sterility, they receive an eternal reward.

Molinos.

THURSDAY

YOU have, it is true, received something, but there is a great deal yet wanting to make you as complete and as perfect as you should be. You are scarcely any more than a rough draft. You have received nothing of the beauty and lustre you are to have. God thought fit to starve you out, that your own wants might force you to have recourse to Him. For this reason it was He left you at first unfinished. His not giving you at your creation all that you stood in need of was an effect not of covetousness, but of love. It was not to leave you poor, but to make you humble. It was not to forsake you in your necessities, but to oblige you to address yourself to Him. For since you are really poor and blind, why do you not go to the Father that made you, and to the painter that first began to draw you, that He may give you what you have not yet received. . . I am not quite finished, O Lord, because the eyes of my soul are not yet opened. Grant me, O Lord, that light which is necessary for me. Enlighten the eyes of this wretch that has been born blind, that he may see Thee, and that Thou, O God, mayest finish what Thou hast already begun in me.

St Luis of Granada.

FRIDAY

WHY do ye men shew pride, why raise yourselves against so high a power? Ye can do naught against Him, for the Eternal and the Almighty One is ever seated on the high seat of His authority, whence He can see all, and rewardeth each man very justly after his works. Therefore it is not in vain that we hope in God, for He changeth not as we do. Pray to Him humbly, for He is very generous, very merciful. Lift up your hearts to Him when ye raise your hands, and pray for what is right and needful for you, for He will not deny you. Hate evil and flee from it as ye best may; love virtues and follow after them. Ye have great need that ye do what is good, for what ye do is ever done before the Eternal and the Almighty God; He seeth it all, and all He requiteth.

Boethius.

WE sometimes meet with a little failure in humility, in that the soul desires to rise of itself before our Lord raises it, seeking to be Mary before it has laboured with Martha. If our Lord will have a soul to be Mary, there is nothing to be afraid of; but we must not be self-invited guests.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

[TO the young ruler did] our Lord cry out of the great hardship and difficulty that would be to quit all to follow Him, to come to be no more of the world than He was, but as a stranger not having any dwelling-place, but to pass through it as a foreign country, only biding so long as to do the Lord's message, and perform His work, which ought to be our end and design. For the whole drift of our Jesus, in and by all His life, example, and doctrinal admonition was still to wind us off, and ungraft us from out of the strange degenerated vine from whence we so readily suck that life from which a death is to come upon. But to come to what was opened to me from Peter's asking Christ so bluntly what they should have, upon the account of forsaking of all for Him : Which seemed to be a pretty selfish question ; but however our Lord overlooked that, giving an high encouragement to whomsoever shall by forsaking of all, give proof of their love to Him, and esteem of the heavenly treasury above the earthly. *Jane Lead.*

Fourth Sunday after Trinity

JUDGE not too fast ; this Tree that does appear
So barren, may be fruitful the next year :
Hast thou not patience to expect the hour ?
I fear, thy own are Crabs, they be so sour :
Thy Judgment oft may tread beside the text,
A Saul today, may prove a Paul the next.

Quarles.

WHEN a man turneth his eyes inwards, he will
behold sin so great within himself, that all the
defects and spots of his neighbour will appear to him
small and few : yea, that which belongeth to others
will, in respect of his sin, by him be accounted
rather for good, than for evil. But if any one weigheth
the sins of others in a too strict balance, and judgeth
too rigorously of them, it is a certain sign that this
man doth not know himself, nor is come unto
regeneration.

Matthew Weyer.

MONDAY

WE are to act with care, because the use of the materials of action is not indifferent ; and at the same time with intrepidity and tranquillity, because the materials themselves are indifferent.

Epictetus.

HOW can a man be without appetites and enjoyment so long as he is in this present state ? I cannot possibly find that to be bitter nor barren of natural enjoyment which is the satisfaction of my natural desires. This I cannot alter, so long as nature is nature.

True : but this pleasure, ease, satisfaction, enjoyment, or delight must not penetrate into the depths of thy heart, nor make up a portion of thy inner life. It must pass away with the things that caused it, and have no abiding place in thee.

Tauler.

EVERY event of life, every circumstance of our lot, is a husk containing precious food,—instruction in righteousness, communion with Jesus,—and yet how much of life we receive as a mere husk, without seeking for or receiving the hidden sweetness !

Erskine of Linlathen.

TUESDAY

SINCE all men from their birth employ sense prior to intellect, and are necessarily first conversant with sensibles, some, proceeding no farther, pass through life, considering these as the first and last of things, and apprehending that whatever is painful among these is evil, and whatever is pleasant is good ; thus thinking it sufficient to pursue the one and avoid the other. Those too among them, who pretend to a greater share of reason than others, esteem this to be wisdom, being affected in a manner similar to more heavy birds, who collecting many things from the earth, and being oppressed with the weight, are unable to fly on high, though they have received wings for this purpose from nature. . . . In the other class is the race of divine men, who through a more excellent power, and with piercing eyes, acutely perceive supernal light, to the vision of which they raise themselves above the clouds and darkness as it were of this lower world, and there abiding despise every thing in these regions of sense ; being no otherwise delighted with the place which is truly and properly their own, than he who after many wanderings is at length restored to his lawful country.

Plotinus.

WEDNESDAY

LO! I have garnered thee up with such bitter toil :
 wherefore, if the whole earth were a consuming
 fire, and there lay in the midst of it a handful of flax,
 it would not, from its very nature, be so susceptible
 of the burning flames as the abyss of My mercy is
 ready to pardon a repentant sinner, and blot out his
 sins. *Suso.*

I SAW how His mercy was poured out on all His
 creation, and, of all, most wondrously on men.
 For I saw how He loved all, sought their welfare,
 suffered the sinners, pardoned the transgressors, called
 to Him those who went astray, received those who
 returned to Him, waited for those who tarried, spared
 the stubborn ones, overlooked those who offended
 Him, pardoned the contrite, embraced those who
 humbled themselves, taught the ignorant, comforted
 the sorrowful, warned men from falling, raised up
 those who had fallen, gave to those who implored
 Him, granted gifts even to those who implored Him
 not, opened to those who knocked, went Himself to
 visit those who did not knock, allowed those who
 sought to find Him, appeared Himself to those who
 sought Him not. *Comenius.*

THURSDAY

THEY do not understand that the Lord, of His mercy, leads every one who receives Him ; that he receives Him who lives according to the laws of Divine order, which are the precepts of love and faith ; and that to be thus led by the Lord from infancy to the end of life in the world, and afterwards to eternity, is what is meant by mercy. Be it known therefore, that every man is born for heaven, and that he is received who receives heaven in himself in the world, and he is excluded who does not receive it.

Swedenborg.

THE senses are not capable of Divine blessings ; hence if thou wouldst be happy and wise, be silent and believe, suffer and have patience, be confident and walk on ; it concerns thee far more to hold thy peace, and to let thyself be guided by the Hand of God, than to enjoy all the goods of this world.

Molinos.

FRIDAY

MERCY is a sweet gracious working in love, mingled with plenteous pity : for mercy worketh in keeping us, and mercy worketh turning to us all things to good. Mercy by love, suffereth us to fail in measure and in as much as we fail, in so much we fall ; and in as much as we fall, in so much we die : for it needs must be that we die in so much as we fail of the sight and feeling of God that is our life. Our failing is dreadful, our falling is shameful, and our dying is sorrowful : but in all this the sweet eye of pity and love is lifted never off us, nor the working of mercy ceaseth. For I beheld the property of mercy, and I beheld the property of grace : which have two manners of working in one love. Mercy worketh : keeping, suffering, quickening, and healing ; and all is tenderness of love. And grace worketh : raising, rewarding, endlessly overpassing that which our longing and our travail deserveth, spreading abroad and shewing the high plenteous largess of God's royal Lordship in His marvellous courtesy ; and this is of the abundance of love. For grace worketh our dreadful failing into plenteous, endless solace ; and grace worketh our shameful falling into high worshipful rising ; and grace worketh our sorrowful dying into holy blissful life.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

SATURDAY

IT is for want of religious Laws in the Use of innocent and lawful Things that the Spirit of the Gospel cannot get Possession of our Hearts. For our Souls may receive an infinite Hurt, and be rendered incapable of all true Virtue, merely by the Use of innocent and lawful Things. *William Law.*

MAN hath still either toyes or Care ;
He hath no root, nor to one place is ty'd,
But ever restless and Irregular
About this Earth doth run and ride.
He knows he hath a home, but scarce knows where ;
He sayes it is so far,
That he hath quite forgot how to go there.
Henry Vaughan.

KNOW that to every man Adversity is more profitable than Prosperity. For Prosperity is ever false, and deludeth men to believe that she is true happiness ; but Adversity is the real happiness, though we may not think so ; for she is steadfast, and her promises always come true. Prosperity is false, and betrays all her friends, for by her changefulness she shews forth her fickleness, but Adversity betters and teaches all those to whom she joins herself.

Boethius.

Fifth Sunday after Trinity

THEY [the Gnostics] find fault with this universe, reprobate the communion of the soul with body, and blame the governor of the world. . . . Just as if in a great dance, which is conducted in a becoming manner, a tortoise being caught in the middle of the progression, should be trod upon, not being able to escape the order of the dance ; though if the tortoise had arranged itself with the dance, it would not have suffered from those that composed it.

Plotinus.

FOR God unfolds, by slow degrees,
 The purport of His deep decrees ;
 Sheds every hour a clearer light
 In aid of our defective sight ;
 And spreads, at length, before the soul
 A beautiful and perfect whole,
 Which busy man's inventive brain
 Toils to anticipate in vain.

Cowper.

MONDAY

EVERY time that you try to provide against the future, and seek for securities with God, He will upset your precautions ; and everything to which you would hold, will escape you. So abandon every thing without reserve. The peace of God only subsists perfectly in the annihilation of all self-will, and self-interest.

Fénelon.

WHAT is the will of God that I should do now ? What is not his will ? A little while ago it was his will that you should be at leisure, should talk with yourself, write about these things, read, hear, prepare yourself. You have had sufficient time for this. At present he says to you, "Come now to the combat. Shew us what you have learned, how you have wrestled."

Epictetus.

DO not be disconsolate, though you may not immediately correspond with our Lord ; for His Majesty knows how to wait many days and years, especially when He sees in us perseverance and good desires. This is what is most necessary here, because by perseverance we never fail to gain a great deal.

St Teresa.

TUESDAY

WHEN the soul is permitted to sit at the feet of Christ, let it contrive not to quit its place, but keep it anyhow. Let us follow the example of the Magdalene ; and when it shall be strong enough, God will lead it into the wilderness.

St Teresa.

EVEN they that have some title to this love of God, and are desiring evidence of it, yet do often sit exceedingly in their own light, and work against their end, still bent on that assurance they would have, and yet neglect the way to it, which certainly is in a manner, to neglect it. Were they more busied in honouring God, doing Him what service they can in their station, striving against sin, acknowledging His goodness to the world, and even to themselves, that they are yet in the region of hope, nor cut off in their iniquities, thus offering praise and ordering their conversation aright, submitting unto Him, and giving Him glory, their assurances and comforts, in the measure He thinks fit, would come in due time, and sooner in this way than in any other they could take.

Archbp. Leighton.

WEDNESDAY

DEAR night ! this world's defeat :
 The stop to busie fools ; care's check and curb ;
 The day of Spirits ; my soul's calm retreat
 Which none disturb !
 Christ's progress, and his prayer time ;
 The hours to which high Heaven doth chime.

God's silent searching flight :
 When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all
 His locks are wet with the clear drops of night ;
 His still soft call ;
 His knocking time ; The soul's dumb watch,
 When spirits their Fair Kindred catch.

There is in God, some say,
 A deep, but dazzling darkness ; As men here
 Say it is late and dusky, because they
 See not all clear.

O for that night ! where I in him
 Might live invisible and dim !

Henry Vaughan.

THURSDAY

WITHOUT patience we cannot please God. It is because anger and impatience are the very pith and sap of pride that they please the devil so much. But note, that there are two sources of impatience. There is a common kind of impatience, felt by ordinary men in the world and which befalls them on account of the inordinate love they have for themselves, and for temporal things, which they love apart from God ; so that to have them they do not mind losing their soul. . . Now I talk of the more particular [kind], of the impatience of those who have already despised the world, and who wish to be servants of Christ crucified in their own way ; that is, in so far as they shall find joy and consolation in Him. This is because spiritual self-will is not dead in them : therefore they imperiously demand from God that He should give them consolations and tribulations in their own way, and not in His ; and so they become impatient, when they get the contrary of what their spiritual self-will wants. This is a little off-shoot from Pride, sprouting from real Pride, as a tree sends out a little tree by its side, which looks separated from it, but nevertheless it gets the substance from which it springs from the same tree. So is self-will in the soul which chooses to serve God in its own way ; and when that way fails it suffers, and its suffering makes it impatient, and it is unendurable to itself, and takes no pleasure in serving God or its neighbour.

St Catherine of Siena.

FRIDAY

O HOLY Jesus, who didst for us die,
 And on the Altar bleeding lie,
 Bearing all torment, pain, reproach, and shame,
 That we, by vertue of the same,
 Though enemies to God, might be
 Redeemed and set at liberty :
 As Thou didst us forgive,
 So meekly let us love to others shew
 And live in Heaven on Earth below.

Let's prize their Souls, and let them be our Gems,
 Our Temples and our Diadems,
 Our Brides, our Friends, our fellow-Members, Eyes,
 Hands, Hearts and Souls, our Victories,
 And Spoils and Trophies, our own Joys !
 Compared to Souls all else are Toys ;
 O Jesus, let them be
 Such unto us as they are unto Thee,
 Vessels of Glory and Felicity.

Traherne.

SATURDAY

ARE there any two things in the world more different from one another, than God and a sinner? And yet are there any things more closely united than God and man are now? There is nothing, says St Bernard, more high than God, and nothing lower than the clay man was made of. Yet has God, with so much humility, descended into this clay, and this clay with so much honour ascended to God, that we may say the clay has done whatsoever God has done, and God has suffered all the clay has suffered.

St Luis of Granada.

I KNOW it is my sinne, which locks Thine eares,
And bindes Thy hands !

Out-crying my requests, drowning my tears ;
Or else the chilnesse of my faint demands.

But as cold hands are angrie with the fire,
And mend it still ;
So do I lay the want of my desire,
Not on my sinnes, or coldnesse, but Thy will.

Yet heare, O God, onely for His bloud's sake,
Which pleads for me :

For though sinnes plead too, yet like stones they make
His bloud's sweet current much more loud to be.

George Herbert.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity

THY love claims highest thanks, my sin
The lowest pitch :

But if he prays, who loves much, then
Thou hast made beggars rich.

Henry Vaughan.

WHAT I mean by Control, is the act by which man surrenders to God his own will and all his self-hood that he may no longer will anything but what God wills. Then our liberty is placed under the control of the divine liberty ; we are free ; God is free ; we must enclose our wills in His. Whatever be our way of life, and the habit which covers us, we must each of us become the holy one of God. So long as we prefer to take precautions rather than to trust ourselves absolutely, so long as our will has caprices which are strangers to our union with the divine, fancies of *yes* and *no*, we remain children, we do not walk in love with giant's steps ; for the fire has not yet consumed all the dross ; the gold is not pure ; we are still self-seekers ; God has not burnt up all our hostility to Him

Ruysbroek.

MONDAY

ONLY he who is founded upon Charity is ready to die for the love of God and the salvation of souls : because he is free from self-love. For he who abides in self-love is not ready to give his life ; and not to speak of his life, apparently he is not willing to bear the least little pain : for he is alway afraid for himself, lest he lose his bodily life and his private consolations. So he does whatever he may do imperfectly and corruptly, because his chief impulse, through which he acts, is corrupt. In whatever state he may be, shepherd or subject, he shews little virtue.

St Catherine of Siena.

WE must endeavour to yield ready obedience, and always to attend to that which is next : and so also from the very first beginning the cross will not be wanting, and by the way thereof we shall go. By what a man departeth from earthly things, in obedience to his conscience, by that is he, at length, rightly prepared to come into the earth, that is, into the corruption of himself ; and that which grows out of this, standeth before God.

Matthew Weyer.

TUESDAY

AH well, ye men, let each that is free make for goodness and happiness ; and let him that is now held captive by the unprofitable love of this world seek freedom, so that he may come to happiness. For this is the one resting-place from all our toils ; and this haven alone is ever calm after all the storms and billows of our hardships. It is the only refuge, the sole comfort of poor mortals after the misery of this present life. *Boethius.*

TO rejoice in sorrow, and to live in death, is to take safety from one's enemies. For what enemy is greater than death, and yet out of it how much health springeth ? for by death we are separated from that which came into us by the Fall of Adam. Before death, a man hath a kingdom in God, but in death God hath, or giveth a kingdom in man.

Matthew Weyer.

IT is God's will that we take His behests and His comfortings as largely and as mightily as we may take them, and also He willeth that we take our abiding and our troubles as lightly as we may take them, and set them at nought. For the more lightly we take them, and the less price we set on them, for love, the less pain we shall have in the feeling of them, and the more thanks and meed we shall have for them. *Lady Julian of Norwich.*

WEDNESDAY

KNOW that there are temptations with which we men tempt God, and that there are temptations with which God tempts men, and that there are temptations with which devils tempt men, and with which some men tempt other men, and with which men tempt themselves.

We men tempt God when, distrusting His word and His promises, we murmur against Him, not holding it to be certain that He is true to His promises. Thus the Jewish nation frequently tempted God in the desert, and thus they tempt Him, who in their hearts are uncertain whether God will fulfil what He promises them or not. God tempts men, not because He is uncertain as to what He holds to be in them, but in order that they may be certain of what they hold in Him, and in order that they may be certified as to what they are ; so that, although there is no uncertainty upon the part of God, there is on our part. Amongst these are the temptations of Abraham, and the temptations with which Christ tempted His disciples.

Juan de Valdes.

THURSDAY

BEFORE we arrive at regeneration, we must be dragged through an unknown, forsaken and desolate path, and God pulls a man by this way against his will. For when a man laboured under the Law, so that he could advance no further, and supposed that he was now arrived at the end of his journey, then at length must he journey, and be hurried through this unknown way. The first way was pleasant, and full of fresh green herbs, though it also seemed difficult, and a man thought that the end thereof would be God. Yet the end proved to be no other than this aforesaid rough way, which is Purgatory, in which a man is purged from all things which are of the flesh. God indeed draws a man hither and thither in this way, and still some small piece of flesh is torn off here or there, till it be left quite bare, and nothing but spirit remains. Then God cometh and applyeth Himself unto man, and gives Himself to be known of man, and so this man comes at length to arrive at true substance or essence, of which he is made capable by this suffering, for in it he is fully purged, and made fit to receive God. Consequently, we become not in our minds, partakers with Christ, until, being purified by these sufferings, we are made capable of Him.

red. by Wey.

Matthew Weyer.

FRIDAY

BE persuaded then, you whose hearts He hath wrought for Himself, to attend better on Him, and the advantage shall be yours ; doubt it not : and though for a time you find it not, yet wait on, and go on in that way ; it shall not disappoint you. The more you let go of the false, vain comforts of the world for His sake, the more richly you shall be furnished with His. Oh ! we make not room for them ; that is the great hinderance. Consider Him, behold His works, bless Him, confess Him always worthy of *praise for His goodness and His wonderful works to the children of men*, however He deal with thee in particular : and assuredly He shall deal graciously with thee : and ere long thou shalt find and be forced to acknowledge it. Though it may be thou want those bright shinings of comforts thou wouldest have, yet, looking to Him, and walking before Him, observing these things, thou shalt have of His light to lead thee on, and a calm within ; sweet peace, though not that height of joy thou desirest. If we were more studious to please Him, forgetting ourselves, we should find Him remember us the more ; yet not for this neither, but simply for Himself. In a word, this is thy wisdom ; mind thy duty, and refer to Him thy comfort.

Archbp. Leighton.

SATURDAY

NO man that is not dead cometh under grace and the Gospel : therefore they falsely boast, who glory that they are under grace without death. A man not dead is first to be subdued by the Law, and therefore is to be prepared for death by means of which he is freed from the Law, and comes under grace : as long as he is alive, he belongs to the subjection of the Law, but when he is, after that, dead, he is under grace, for Christ is not the servant of sin, that He might leave our sins in their own state, but He came that He might free us from sin, which is done by the means of death. Sin is punished with death. And Christ is no defender of the natural man, that he should remain alive. For if He should do that, we should come without death into God, which is impossible. *Matthew Weyer.*

UNION with God in the spirit is the goal which we must keep before our eyes : what can be helpful to us for this, must in so far be dear and highly prized : but all else, and in particular what ever may meet us from outside, we must see to it that we regard with perfect indifference, so that we are not hindered in the one thing needful by letting in anything strange too far. Nothing of all that happens outside us is worth our disquieting ourselves inwardly. All our care in and about everything must only be that we may please God, and stand right with Him. *Tersteegen.*

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

WE all acknowledge and believe that God gives help, and yet we often remain unhelped. God gives, but man often loses the benefit of the gift by not knowing how to receive it. We may have just thoughts and striking thoughts of God's love to us, and of His will to help us, and yet in the hour of trial we may find that we had been deluding ourselves with thoughts instead of faith and principles, amusing our fancies instead of feeding our souls. We need humility and meekness, and the spirit of affectionate clinging dependence. This is the spirit in which alone we can receive God's help.

Erskine of Linlathen.

IT is a priceless gift that we are permitted to go on in unlimited growth in God's Love amid this weary life.

St Francis de Sales.

THOUGH God needs nothing, let us render to Him the grateful recompense of a thankful heart, and of piety, as a kind of house-rent for our dwelling here below.

Clement of Alexandria.

MONDAY

MARK but the course the pin'd Egyptian ran :
 When all their Coin, when all their Corn is
 done,
 They come to Joseph, and their stomachs plead :
 They change their Beasts for Corn, their Flocks for
 Bread,
 Yet still they want : Observe now what they do ;
 They give their Lands, and yield their Bodies too :
 Now they have Corn enough ; and now they shall
 Have Seed to sow their barren Soil withal ;
 Provided that the fifth of their increase
 Be Pharaoh's : Now their stomachs are at peace.
 Thus when the Famine of the World shall strike
 Our hungry Souls, our Souls must do the like.
 We first must part with (as by their directions)
 Our Flocks, our Beasts, our Bestial Affections ;
 When they are gone, and then must Sinners do,
 Give up their Lands, their Souls and Bodies too ;
 O, then our hearts shall be refresht and fed,
 We shall have Seed to sow, and present Bread :
 Allowing but the fifth of our increase,
 We shall have plenty, and our Souls have peace.
 How art Thou pleas'd, good God, that Man should
 live !
 How slow art Thou to take ! how free to give !

Quarles.

TUESDAY

BEING convinced and sensible of the want of it [Wisdom], to use the right way to attain it, is to give all diligent attendance on the word and ordinances of God, to desire it of Him. Desire is all : if you desire much, you shall have much. Vent thy desire this way heavenwards, whence this wisdom descends. This light springs from on high : man cannot raise himself to it without another : *If any man lack wisdom*, if he is but once sensible of that, why then the sweetest, easiest way to attain it that can be desired, is pointed out ; *let him ask it of God, who gives liberally and upbraideth not* : does neither harshly refuse, nor upbraidingly give it, delights to give it to them that ask it, even His own Holy Spirit, the spring of this wisdom, as He hath promised. We are all too little in this humble seeking and begging of this divine knowledge, and that this is the cause we are so shallow, and small proficients. If thou cry and lift up thy voice for understanding, search for it as for hid treasures : sit down upon thy knees and dig for it : that is the best posture to fall aright upon the golden vein, and go deepest to know the mind of God, in searching the Scriptures, to be directed and regulated in His ways, to be made skilful in ways of honouring Him, and doing Him service ; this, men nor angels cannot teach him, but God alone.

Archbp. Leighton.

WEDNESDAY

WHEN first thy Eies unveil, give thy soul leave
 To do the like ; our Bodies but forerun
 The Spirit's duty. True hearts spread and heave
 Unto their God, as flow'rs do to the Sun.

Give him thy first thoughts then ; so shalt thou
 keep

Him company all day, and in him sleep.

Yet never sleep the Sun up. Prayer should
 Dawn with the day. There are set, awful hours
 'Twixt heaven and us. The Manna was not good
 After Sun-rising ; far-day sullies flowres.

Rise to prevent the Sun ; sleep doth sins glut,
 And heaven's gate opens when this world's is shut.

Serve God before the world ; let him not go,
 Until thou hast a blessing ; then resigne
 The whole unto him ; and remember who
 Prevail'd by wrestling ere the Sun did shine.

Pour Oyle upon the stones ; weep for thy sin ;
 Then journey on, and have an eie to heav'n.

Mornings are Mysteries ; the first world's Youth,
 Man's Resurrection, and the future's Bud.
 Shroud in their births : The Crown of life, light,
 truth

Is still'd their starre, the stone, and hidden food,
 Three blessings wait upon them, two of which
 Should move : they make us *holy, happy, rich.*

Henry Vaughan.

THURSDAY

WHAT is it that I am thinking of at this moment ?
 Is it God ? No, it is something else. Then
 is this something else better, more beautiful, more
 present, more pleasureable than God ? Is it worth
 forgetting God for ? Ah ! on the contrary ; it is a
 shadow, a nothing, it is even something ugly,
 transitory, annoying, and spoiling ; and on account of
 such a thing as this do I forget God, my source, the
 one, eternal, and perfect Pleasure. But I am think-
 ing of something *good*. Thou doest well ; but why
 not of the Best of all ? Of the highest Good, of the
 all-one Good, of the very present Good, Who desires
 to impart Himself to all.

Tersteegen.

THE God then is not Mind, but the cause that
 Mind is. Nor Spirit, but cause that Spirit is.
 Nor Light, but cause that Light is. Whence one
 must venerate The God under these two appellations ;
 these to Him alone appertaining, and to no other—
 for neither of others called Gods, nor of men, nor of
 demons, can any one, even after a sort be good, but
 The God alone ; and this alone He is and nothing
 else.

Hermes Trismegistus.

FRIDAY

WONDERFUL and marvellous is the work of love ! God gives it to man, that he may do what is necessary to reach the perfection for which he is destined. He grants him further the grace and light that he needs, and He increases these little by little in such a way and in such a degree that he has never more nor less than he needs : for if he had not enough he could excuse himself from not having laboured because grace was wanting : if grace were too abundant, he would be punished for having failed to co-operate with it. Grace is multiplied according to man's use of it : when the work grows, grace grows also ; if the work does not grow, neither does grace. Thus it is clear that step by step, God gives man what is necessary, neither more nor less ;—to each according to his degree and capacity ;—and God does all this through love and for the service of men. But we are cold and careless in our working, and since the instinct of the spirit is to rise directly to its perfection, it seems to us that we want grace, although it is not so. It is solely our own fault if we do not co-operate according to the present grace that is in us, and this is why we believe so little for the future.

St Catherine of Genoa.

SATURDAY

BY wise Contrivance He doth all things guide,
 And so dispose them that while they unite,
 For man He endless pleasures doth provide,
 And shows that Happiness is His delight,
 His Creatures' Happiness as well as His :
 For that in truth He seeks, and 'tis His bliss.

O Rapture ! Wonder ! Ecstasie ! Delight !
 How great must then His glory be, how great
 Our Blessedness ! How vast and infinite
 Our Pleasure, how transcendent, how complete,
 If we the Goodness of our God possess,
 And all His joy be in our blessedness !

Traherne.

FOR to love God is no other thing than most accurately to do that which He willeth, not for the hope of any salvation, or of any good thing whatever ; for the love of God itself thus puts a man on, that he cannot do otherwise. And here it is that we are able to search into the most inward corners of our hearts, whether or no we seek ourselves elsewhere, either in soul or body, and whether we serve God, and love Him for this end, that our souls may gain salvation.

Matthew Weyer.

Eighth Sunday after Trinity

PERHAPS thou wilt say : "What wrong can be greater than to allow it to happen, as it does at times happen, that unmixed evil befalls the good in this world, and good unalloyed comes to the wicked." The man that would inquire into this must first know what the onefold Providence of God is, and what Fate is, what happens by chance, and what are divine intelligence, divine predestination, and human freewill. Providence is the Divine Reason, and lieth fast in the high Creator that knoweth how every thing shall befall ere it come to pass. But that which we call Fate is God's working day by day, both that which we see, and that which is not seen of us. That which we call Fate is, compared to divine Providence, what reflexion and reason are when measured against perfect knowledge, and as things temporal compared with things eternal. When aught of good or evil befalls a man in greater measure than thou thinkest he deserves, it is not God's unrighteousness but thy dullness not to be able to discern it aright. The Creator and Ruler governeth all things, and rightly fashioned all that He hath created, and hath wrought no evil nor yet worketh it, but driveth away every wrong from his kingdom . . for 'tis the wont of the divine power to work good out of evil. . . That which is right is not evil but good.

Boethius.

MONDAY

NEVERTHELESS may inner clouds and distractions of the mind have their origin in ourselves, as for instance when we do not sufficiently guard the windows of our senses, hearing, seeing, speaking ; or also when we let our thoughts go a-wandering, the livelong day, which occasionally happens even willingly, to the best of us ; but these things come unnoticed. Much more harmful is the secret clinging to things outside God, when the heart lets itself be drawn and held to created things by a too great love and desire. Where the mind recognises in itself such a clinging, and withdraws and wholly turns from it, then is it a sorrow, and not so harmful. There is yet another cause of manifold straitnesses, clouds, and scattered thoughts, of which I cannot forbear to speak. This cause is : when the outward things, either that we have to do ourselves, or that are done or spoken by others, or that meet us in any other way, make too strong an impression on us ; whether it is pleasant or disagreeable, both are harmful, if we let them go too deep ; for thereby many images are printed on the mind that disturb and cloud our quietness and gladness ; and are the seed of thousandfold distractions, whether they strike their roots deep or not.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

BY two wings a man is lifted up from earth : namely by Simplicity and Purity. Simplicity ought to be in intention, Purity in affection. Simplicity intends God : Purity apprehends and tastes Him.

Thomas à Kempis.

MY dwelling is in the pure soul, as in a paradise of delights : for which reason I cannot bear that she should attach herself to anything with love and desire. She is inclined however, from her very nature, to pernicious pleasures, therefore I encompass her path with thorns. I garnish all her outlets with adversity, whether it please her or not, so that she may not escape from me. I strew her ways with tribulation, so that she may not set the foot of her heart's desire anywhere except in the loftiness of My divine Nature. Such is My eternal order in all nature, from which I do not swerve : that which is precious and good must be earned with bitterness : he who recoils at this, let him recoil ; many are indeed called, but very few chosen.

Suso.

RESIGNATION and entire surrender of ourselves unto God consist in being convinced that whatsoever befalls us from one moment to another, and whatsoever we lack, is in the order and will of God.

Mme. Guyon.

WEDNESDAY

'TIS not to cry, God Mercy, or to sit
 And droop, or to confess that thou has fail'd ;
 'Tis to bewail the sins thou didst commit ;
 And not commit those sins thou hast bewail'd :
 He that bewails and not forsakes them too,
 Confesses rather what he means to do.

Quarles.

WE must give Divine fuel to our soul's fire, if it
 be to burn in a Divine source or quality, and
 if a Divine Light be to shine from it ; earthly fuel
 giveth an earthly source or quality, and a Light
 according to that source or quality : whatsoever a
 man kindleth in himself, *that* burneth in him.

Jacob Behmen.

TILL the mind be purged, the affection purified, the
 memory naked, the understanding brightened,
 the will denied and set on fire, the soul can never
 arrive at intimate union with God : and therefore,
 because the spirit of God is purity itself, and light
 and rest, the soul, where He intends to make His
 abode, must have great purity, peace, attention, and
 quiet. Finally, the precious gift of a purged mind,
 those only have who with continual diligence do seek,
 love, and retain it, and desire to be reputed the
 lowest in the world.

Molinos.

THURSDAY

AS ornament of Divine body, He sent down the Man, immortal animal, mortal animal. And the Man indeed excelled the animals and the world because of the Speech and of the Mind. For the Man became spectator of the works of The God, and wondered, and acknowledged the Maker. The Speech then, He hath imparted among all the men, but by no means the Mind.

Wherefore then, O father ! has not The God imparted the Mind to all men ?

He willed, O child ! this to be stationed in the midst, as it were a prize for the Souls.

And where hath He stationed it ?

Having filled a great Cup, of this He sent down giving a herald, and commanded him to proclaim to the hearts of men these things : Baptize thyself who is able into this the Cup, which is believing that thou shalt return to Him Who hath sent down the Cup, which is recognizing for what thou wast generated. As many then, as understood the proclamation and were baptized with The Mind, these partook of the knowledge, and became perfect men, having received the Mind. But as many as failed of the proclamation, they having obtained the Speech, but not the Mind, are ignorant for what they were generated, and by Whom. . . . This then is the science of the Mind, the inspection of divine things, and the recognition of The God—the Cup being Divine.

Hermes Trismegistus.

FRIDAY

LORD ! thou didst put a soul here. If I must
 Be broke again, for flints will give no fire
 Without a steel, O let thy power cleer
 Thy gift once more, and grind this flint to dust !
Henry Vaughan.

THE love which is founded in God must be of such a sort that it has to love with regard to virtue, and inasmuch as the friend is a creature made in the image of God. . . . I say that if one abides in God, even if virtue should fail in him who is loved, yet love does not turn away. The love of the virtue which is not there fails to be sure : but it does not fail in so far as a man is a creature of God, His member, bound in the mystical body of the Holy Church. Nay, there grows within one a love made up of great and true compassion, and with desire he brings his friend to the birth, with tears and sighs and continual prayers in the sweet Presence of God. Now this is the affection which Christ left to His disciples, which never lessens or grows languid, and is not impatient for any injury it receives : there is no spirit of criticism in it, nor displeasure, because it loves the friend, not for himself, but for God. Such men are bound in the bond of charity with the band which held God-and-Man fast and nailed on the wood of the most holy Cross.

St Catherine of Siena.

SATURDAY

GOD calls us to exercise self-denial every hour and every moment : but nothing is more false than the maxim that we must always choose what involves the most self-denial.

Fénelon.

ALL our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, through the stains of vanity, conceitedness, and self-love. It is necessary they be purified with the fire of tribulation and temptation, that so they may be clean, pure, perfect, and agreeable to the eyes of God. Therefore the Lord purifies the soul which He calls and will have for Himself, with the rough file of temptation, with which He polishes it from the rust of pride, avarice, vanity, ambition, presumption, and self-conceitedness. With the same He humbles, pacifies, and exercises it, making it to know its own misery. By means thereof He purifies and strips the heart, to the end all its operations may be pure, and of inestimable value.

Molinos.

PARIS, they say, was undone, because the Greeks invaded Troy and laid it waste, and his family were slain in battle. By no means ; for no-one is undone by an action not his own. His true undoing was when he lost the modest, the faithful, the hospitable, and the decent character.

Epictetus.

Ninth Sunday after Trinity

I DO verily believe that God doth generally defend all men in the world, by His special and particular providence, against the devil ; so that unless men either wilfully give God an offence, or betray themselves to the devil by their own voluntary consent, he can have no power over them. Neither do I think that every act of sin is of this nature, but it must be such a specific, such a miscarriage, such a way of sinning in kind, which doth incur a particular forfeiture of God's protection against the devil.

Whichcote.

I KNOW no better evidence of strength in grace, than to bear much with those that are weak in it.

Archbp. Leighton.

FOR where desire, celestiall, pure desire,
Hath taken root and grows, and doth not tire,
There God a Commerce states, and sheds
His Secret on their heads.

This is the Heart he craves ; and who so will
But give it him, and grudge not ; he shall feel
That God is true, as herbs unseen
Put on their youth and green.

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

WHEN temptations shall lead us to unbelief and distrust in God's promises, let us recognise that we are tempted as Christians ; I mean, as more than men. Let us imitate Abraham, not setting about to examine God's promises with our human prudence or reason, but with Christian simplicity ; then we shall believe that there is more truth in what God promises, than, when our prudence finds less to lay hold upon, and less wherein to confide. And if, in persevering, the temptation should seek to persuade us that we are not of the number of those pious, to whom God's promises belong, let us here recognise the will of God, and let us rest assured that we, who are thus tempted, need to be strengthened in faith ; and certain of this, let us say thus : " All these are imaginations of mine. God is truthful in His promises ; that which He promises to the pious concerns me, for I believe that He is truthful in what He promises ; and since the promises are theirs who believe them, I believe them, and therefore they are mine. Here I stand, and here I will stand, and herein I will persevere, without ever departing from it ; and in this confidence I rest assured, for my Christ, in whom I believe, and whom I hold to be my Lord, promises me that it is so."

Juan de Valdés.

TUESDAY

LET us have patience invincible in case of provocation. For this is commonly alleged, and it is thought a good justification of a man, if a man have transgressed never so much ; that he was provoked. *Why did he provoke me ?* And men think this is a sufficient account. *Whichcote.*

THOU art to know, then, that temptation is thy great happiness ; so that the more it besets thee, the more thou oughtest to rejoice in peace, instead of being sad, and thank God for the favour He does thee. In all those temptations and odious thoughts, the remedy that is to work, is to despise them with a steadfast neglect, because nothing more afflicts the proud devil than to see that he is slighted and despised, as are all things else that he suggests to us. Finally, thou art to know that the greatest temptation is to be without temptation ; wherefore thou oughtest to be glad when it assaults thee, and with resignation, peace, and constancy, resist it. Because if thou wilt serve God, and arrive at the sublime region of internal peace, thou must pass through that rugged path of temptation, put on that happy armour, fight in that fierce and cruel war, and in that burning furnace polish, purge, renew, and purify thyself..

Molinos.

WEDNESDAY

YOU feel the bitterness of the way, but do not see the blessedness of the end, whither the way leads ; and so it must be. It is not the sight of our humility, but the sight of our misery and nothingness that makes us pleasing to God. May the quiet, willing consciousness of your nothingness be a perpetual adoration of God's omnipotence ! He will "make room enough under thee for to go," but you must be willing not to hold yourself tight, but to let yourself go ; I do not mean by the practice of contemplation of which you are not now capable ; but through a simple bearing, forgetting, and giving up of yourself, just as one lets go a thing out of one's hand that is too heavy, or that one gives up : so only will you find "room enough." There is no danger that you will let yourself go into sin ; the Lord will hold you, "that thy footsteps shall not slide," for your will is not sinful. One thing more ! do not look at your sins, do not look at your unbelief ; but if you are obliged to see them both, comfort yourself with thinking that Jesus, who is ever unchanged and only blessed, sees them also. Seek for the ground of your confidence in the grace of God alone, and in the blessed Name of Jesus, who is and ever will be your support, your shield and your everlasting salvation.

Tersteegen.

AS we can never love God too well, so we can never trust Him too much, if it be but the right sort of trust, that casts all care on Him.

Tauler.

THURSDAY

AT times, certain souls are tormented by an abominable spirit called by Isaiah *Spiritus vertiginis*. The which darkens their senses after such a fashion as to fill them with a thousand scruples and perplexities, which appear to them so involved and intricate that they can never satisfy themselves in any thing, nor stay their faltering judgment upon any prop of counsel or thought. . . But if the soul is not tempted, tried and proved by temptations and trials, she cannot bring her senses into the harbour of Divine Wisdom. . . Those who have more capacity and strength for endurance, He purges with greater intensity and speed. For . . . there are moments and days when God, in order to keep them in humility and the knowledge of themselves, proves and practises them in these drynesses and temptations, and helps them with His comfort: and at other times He does this for long intervals together, lest, losing heart, they turn back to seek the consolation of the world. With souls still weaker, God proceeds in other manner; constantly disappearing and hiding Himself from sight, in order to practise them in His love; for unless He turned away from them they would not learn to draw close to Him.

St John of the Cross.

FRIDAY

ACCEPT, dread Lord, the poore Oblation ;
 It is but poore ;
 Yet through thy mercies may be more,
 O Thou ! that can'st not wish my soul's damnation,
 Afford me life,
 And save me from all inward strife !
 Two Lives I hold from thee, my gracious Lord,
 Both cost thee dear ;
 For one, I am thy Tenant here ;
 The other, the true life, in the next world
 And endless is,
 O let me still mind *that* in *this* !
 To thee therefore my Thoughts, Words, Actions
 I do resign ;
 Thy will in all be done, not mine,
 Settle my house, and shut out all distractions
 That may unknit
 My heart, and thee planted in it ;
 Lord Jesu ! thou didst bow thy blessed head
 Upon a tree,
 O do as much, now unto me !
 O hear, and heal thy servant ! Lord, strike dead
 All lusts in me,
 Who onely wish life to serve thee !
 Suffer no more this dust to overflow
 And drown my eies ;
 But seal, or pin them to thy skies.
 And let this grain, which here in tears I sow,
 Though dead and sick,
 Through thy Increase grow new and quick.

Henry Vaughan.

SATURDAY

MANY, by reason of their sluggishness, postpone the journey of perfection (which is that of the denial of their own will and pleasure for the sake of God), to the satisfaction and savour of the will, which they go about to please after their own fashion more than that of God. And many of these were fain God's will coincided with their own, and become sad at having to bend their will to God's, and feel repugnance at being obliged to suit their will to the Divine. Whence arises in them that they often think that what they find not to be their own will and pleasure, is not the will of God. *St John of the Cross.*

DO not think about sin, at least not deliberately. The thought often arouses temptation. Fixed and constant gazing at our sins and temptations makes us little of courage and little of faith. Or are you afraid that so many sins and strong temptations may arise, that Jesus will not be able to help you any more? Foolish creature! Regard your sins and all that works in you against your will, as something that does not concern you: leave the horror there; it is not worth your remembrance and attention. Experience teaches us that great temptations are often overcome by simply forgetting them. Reflect that you have something else to do in the world than always to think about sin. God and His Presence must be the principal business of your heart. If it again seizes hold of you, how miserable, corrupt, and full of sin you are, then say: I know that full well, but just now I have no time to think about it.

Tersteegen.

Tenth Sunday after Trinity

GOOD Prayers never came weeping home : I am
 sure I shall receive either what I aske, or what
 I should aske.

Bishop Hall.

MAN'S plea to Man, is, that he never more
 Will beg, and that he never begg'd before ;
 Man's plea to God, is, that he doth obtain
 A former Suit, and therefore sues again.
 How good a God we serve ; that when we sue,
 Makes His old Gifts examples of His new.

Quarles.

WHEN the man who chooses what is right, and
 is at the same time of thankful heart, makes
 his request in prayer, he contributes to the obtaining
 of it, gladly taking hold in prayer of the thing
 desired. For when the Giver of good things per-
 ceives the susceptibility on our part, all good things
 follow at once the conception of them. Certainly in
 prayer the character is sifted, how it stands with
 respect to duty.

Clement of Alexandria.

MONDAY

LET him ^{who} never cease from prayer who has once begun it, be his life ever so wicked ; for prayer is the way to amend it, and without prayer such amendment will be much more difficult. Let him not be tempted by Satan to give it up, on the pretence of humility ; let him rather believe that His words are true Who says that if we truly repent, and resolve never to offend Him, He will take us into His favour again, give us the graces He gave us before, and occasionally even greater, if our repentance deserve it.

St Teresa.

KNOW that the effort which thou thyself mayest make to resist thoughts is an impediment, and will leave thy soul in greater anxiety. The best thing that is to be done, is sweetly to despise them, to know thine own wretchedness, and peacefully make an offering to God of the trouble. As many times as thou exercisest thyself calmly to reject these vain thoughts, so many crowns will the Lord set upon thy head ; and though it may seem to thee that thou dost nothing, be undeceived ; for a good desire, with firmness and steadfastness in prayer, is very pleasing to the Lord.

Molinos.

TUESDAY

IF in praying to Almighty God, or singing His praises, you cannot be so attentive as you would, lose therefore neither your courage nor your confidence : For though your mind may be distracted, your prayers will not cease to be pleasing to God, if you consent not to the distraction, and if you do on your part all you can ; if with a good heart you offer to God your will, such as it is, and persevere with care and simplicity in prayer. Be not then impatient, nor excessively troubled, nor afflict yourselves ; but after you have done your utmost endeavours, yield yourself up wholly to God : For He is so good, that He bears with those who speaking to Him in prayer, let sometimes things unworthy of His Presence enter into their thoughts. Say to Him on these occasions : Lord, Thou seest how my heart slips from me, and how it is unhappily distracted in divers places. Have pity on me, who am a poor sinner.

St Luis of Granada.

OF what an easie quick accesse,
 My blessed Lord, art Thou ! how suddenly
 May our requests Thine eare invade !
 To shew that state dislikes not easinesse.
 If I but lift mine eyes, my suit is made :
 Thou canst no more not heare, than Thou canst die.

George Herbert.

WEDNESDAY

PRAYER may be uttered without the voice, by concentrating the whole spiritual nature within on expression by the mind in undistracted turning towards God. *Clement of Alexandria.*

IT is not enough that you be cleansed from all sin ; but you must also endeavour to be free of all thoughts and all solicitousness which may put the least obstacle to devotion. And this is wonderfully well represented by the solitariness of Moses, when he went up on Mount Sinai, to speak with God. He was commanded to go up alone, and that there should not all about the mountain be seen any man or beast ; and God added also to this solitariness a thick cloud and darkness, in which Moses was to communicate with Him ; to the end that being to discourse with God, the solitariness and cloud might take from him the sight of created things. And again another action of the same prophet, when he put off his shoes to walk on the ground where God made His Presence appear, would let you understand that when you would go to Him, you must strip yourself of all the hurry of perishable and terrestrial things with which you are usually surrounded. *St Luis of Granada.*

THURSDAY

WHAT I only aim at is, that we see Him, and remain with Him to whom we are speaking, without our turning our backs upon Him ; for methinks we do this, when we remain discoursing with God, and thinking on a thousand vanities at the same time.

St Teresa.

THE best prayer is nothing else than the love of God.

Fénelon.

PRAYER and mystic theology are nothing else than a conversation by which the soul carries on a loving intercourse with God, through which to attain to full union with Him. Prayer is a "manna" by reason of the countless sweetnesses it imparts to those who use it ; but it is "hidden" because it falls before the dawn of any earthly knowledge, in the mental wilderness where the soul comes face to face with God.

St Francis de Sales.

FRIDAY

PHILOSOPHY. What then must we do to the end that we may reach true happiness? Shall we pray for divine help in less as well as in greater matters, even as our philosopher Plato has said?

Mind. I think we should pray to the Father of all things; for he that will not pray to Him findeth Him not, nor even taketh the right way to find Him.

Boethius.

PRAYER purifies those that have used sin and the vanity of the world. It slays their old sins, and fulfils them of grace that had lost the love of God through their old trespass; and makes them joyful and light for to serve God, that with their ill deeds greatly had grieved Him.

Richard Rolle.

AND also, for more understanding, this blessed word was said: *Lo, how I loved thee! Behold and see that I loved thee so much ere I died for thee that I would die for thee; and now I have died for thee and suffered willingly that which I may. And now is all My bitter pain and all My hard travail turned to endless joy and bliss to Me and to thee. How should it now be that thou shouldst anything pray that pleaseth Me but that I should full gladly grant it thee? For My pleasing is thy holiness, and thine endless joy and bliss with Me.*

Lady Julian of Norwich.

SATURDAY

PRAYER washes us of all wicked workes and all sore sins ; upon all wise it destroys sin and puts it under, and burns asunder the band of all bale with a strange fire flying from heaven as fire out of flint, strange to behold, with bright shining lightening those hearts that stiffly stand in the love and in the loving of God.

Richard Rolle.

ONE sign and condition of this purifying is that, as a rule, the memory is constantly fixed on God, with anxiety and painful watchfulness, since, when she sees herself without her former relish for the things of God, the soul thinks that she doth not serve God, but is going backwards. And herein is seen that this want of appetite and dryness does not arise from coldness and lukewarmness ; since it is of the very nature of lukewarmness not to care nor to feel interior solicitude for the things of God. Wherefore betwixt dryness and lukewarmness there is great difference. Because lukewarmness is subject to great remissness and slackening of the will and courage, and all solicitude to serve God is absent : whereas merely purifying dryness carries with it a constant anxiety accompanied by regret and pain, that the soul, as I say, doth not serve God.

St John of the Cross.

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

DO not have the least fear that our unfaithfulness can make us unworthy of the mercy of God : nothing is so worthy of His mercy as great wretchedness. *Fénelon.*

LORD ! what a busie, restless thing
 Hast thou made man !
 Each day and houre he is on wing,
 Rests not a span,
 Then having lost the Sunne and light,
 By clouds surpriz'd,
 He keeps a Commerce in the night
 With aire disguis'd.
 Hadst thou given to this active dust
 A state untir'd,
 The lost Sonne had not left the huske,
 Nor home desir'd,
 That was thy secret, and it is
 Thy mercy too ;
 For when all failes to bring to blisse,
 Then this must doe.
 Ah ! Lord ! and what a Purchase will that be,
 To take us sick, that sound would not take thee !
 Henry Vaughan,

MONDAY

LET that mercy compel Thee, O Lord my God,
to save that which Thou hast created, which
compelled Thee to create that which Thou hadst not
created. *St Augustine.*

THE Angels, as all other Creatures, partake of the
Goodness of God ; but Man alone among all
the Creatures has the Privilege to be the Object of His
Mercy. *John Norris.*

MERCY is a working that cometh of the goodness
of God, and it shall last in working all along,
as sin is suffered to pursue rightful souls. And when
sin hath no longer leave to pursue, then shall the
working of mercy cease, and then shall all be brought
to rightfulness, and therein stand without end. And
by His sufferance we fall ; and in His blissful Love
with His Might and His Wisdom we are kept ; and
by mercy and grace we are raised to manifold more
joys. Thus in Rightfulness and Mercy He willeth
to be known and loved, now and without end. And
the soul that wisely beholdeth it in grace, it is well
pleased with both, and endlessly enjoyeth.

Lady Julian of Norwich,

TUESDAY

WE must make a place for God, or rather, God must make a place in us for Himself, for our wretchedness is so great that when we displace ourselves from one spot, we shall soon find our selves in another. We are, through and through, wretchedness, and self-ness; it is no good decking and bedizening ourselves; the whole lump is good for nothing; we must be drawn out of our selves, through God, into God. There is none good save God alone; and whoever truly sinks down and loses himself in Him, he becomes good through Him, were he never so evil. Ah! that all poor sinners might see this ocean of endless goodness in Jesus so close at hand, so widely open! Would they not cast themselves into it, and get freed from all hurt and harm. But so it is: many a one feeling naught but himself, bitterly complains: "How weary I am of myself, and yet I must still bear myself!" One calls to him: "Go forth from thyself!" "I cannot find the door." He must experience that he cannot do this, but that also in this matter must the glory be given to God. God desires and wills to heal and sanctify us through Himself, but not without trouble.

Tersteegen.

WEDNESDAY

IT is an Error ev'n as foul to call
Our sins too great for pardon, as too small.
Quarles.

WE defraud God when we take to ourselves the credit of our salvation, but we offend His Mercy if we say that it has ever failed us. We sin against His liberality if we fail to acknowledge His Gifts ; but we blaspheme His Goodness if we deny that it has succoured us. *St Francis de Sales.*

SO great are our Lord's mercy and goodness, that although we continue to be addicted to our pastimes, employments, and pleasures, and are exposed to conflicts with the devil, now falling and then rising ; still, notwithstanding all this, our Lord prizes our loving Him so much, and seeking His company, that He hesitates not, some time or other, to call us to approach nearer to Him. *St Teresa,*

THURSDAY

REMEMBER the widow whose vessels were miraculously filled by Elisha. So long as she had an empty vessel the oil flowed into it, but when she had no more wherein to receive it, the oil stayed. So while our hearts expand, or more truly while we suffer them to be enlarged, and do not refuse the space made by our willing consent to Divine Mercy, that Mercy will not cease to pour in ever more and more its holy inspirations, we meanwhile abounding more and more in love. But when there is no room, when we cease to accept, it is stayed.

St Francis de Sales.

WE can never come unto poverty of spirit, unless first we be taken up into God, and after that be let down again from Him in the condition of the created Nature, that is, into our emptiness or vanity : and then Christ for certain remaineth always with us. No man is safer than when, upon the acknowledgment of our own emptiness, we renounce ambition, that is, the endeavour of appropriating. The peacock helps us to a similitude for this, for when he beholdeth his tail, he setteth it upright, but when he looks down upon his feet, he lets his tail fall : so doth a man set in the vision of God, he desisteth from all aspiring of mind, when he looks upon his feet.

Matthew Weyer.

FRIDAY

WHEN I do wrong, Thou, O my God, art still within me, reprovng the evil that I do, inspiring regret for the good that I abandon, and shewing a Mercy which holds out its arms to me. *Fénelon.*

TO assert our impotency and disability, and that God is wanting in necessary assistance, is to expose us to an invincible temptation ; and that in these three particulars. 1. To entertain hard thoughts of God, and such as are unworthy of Him. 2. To throw off the use of all means, and to take no care at all in this great affair. 3. Finally, to despair ; and we wrong God more by desperation than by presumption. *Whichcote.*

MEN pray to God to be merciful, without believing that He is willing to be merciful ; they pray for deliverance from sin and for full sanctification, without believing that provision is made for it.

Mme. Guyon.

SATURDAY

IN the cross alone, conversion and faith in Christ is given ; and there it is that we have or hear our answer. All fruit grows out of pressure, affliction, and misery, which is everywhere presented, by things visible. Let every one therefore become subject to the cross, and let him not fly from it at all, God knoweth the conclusion of everything, and prepareth its end, how compassionately also doth He deal with us. No man ever perished but he that did flee from the cross, nor was willing to suffer outwardly, and inwardly too. Let not a man be perverse, proud, and lifted up, nor let him speak ambitious words : but let him be humble, simple and lowly, and let him possess his mind in holiness and in contrition, and let that appear in all his doings, in all his apparel, manners, words and works, nor let him ever shew himself proud and puffed up, nor having together therewith the contempt of his neighbour.

Matthew Weyer.

WHEN a breach happens even once between two friends, it is never forgotten, and never are they such friends again as they were before. But how many times do we violate our friendship with God ! How many years does He wait for us in this manner ! Blessed be Thou, O my Lord, who waitest for us with such great compassion.

St Teresa.

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

IT is God's glory that He is so generous and giveth so freely ; it is much that He granteth in bidding until the wicked perceive their sin and turn towards good.

Boethius.

HE seeks for ours as we do seek for His ;
 Nay, O my Soul, ours is far more His bliss
 Than His is ours ; at least it so doth seem
 Both in His own and our esteem.

His earnest love, His infinite desires,
 His living, endless, and devouring fires,
 Do rage in thirst, and fervently require
 A Love 'tis strange it should desire.

Traherne.

WHEN a man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent ; how often soever he shall come to Me for pardon and grace : as I live, saith the Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live ; I will not remember his sins any more, but they shall all be forgiven him.

Thomas à Kempis.

MONDAY

YOU know that God is supremely good, and loved us before we were : and is Eternal Wisdom, and His Power in virtue is immeasurable : so for this reason we are sure that He has power, knowledge and will to give us what we need. Well we see, in proof, that He gives us more than we know how to ask, and that which was not asked by us. Then, since He gives so much without our asking—how much the more will He fulfil our desires when we shall desire a just thing of Him ? Nay, who makes us desire and ask it ? Only He. Then, if He makes us ask it, it is a sign that He means to fulfil it, and give us what we seek.

St Catherine of Siena.

IF any wander, Thou dost call him backe,
 If any be not forward, Thou incitest him ;
 Thou dost expect, if any should grow slacke ;
 If any seem but willing, Thou invitest him ;
 Or if he doe offend Thee, Thou acquittest him :
 Thou find'st the lost, and follow'st him that flies,
 Healing the sicke, and quickening him that dies ;
 Thou art the lame man's friendly staffe, the blind
 man's eyes.

Giles Fletcher.

TUESDAY

DEAR Lord, many a one so bestows a gift on another, that his love and faith are better known by his way than by his gift. A small gift in a faithful way, is often better than a great one without this way. Now, Lord, not only is Thy gift so great, but also the way of it, methinks, is so unfathomably faithful. Thou didst not only suffer death for me, but Thou didst also seek whatever is deepest in love, whatever is most intimate and hidden, in which suffering can or may be experienced. *Suso.*

I CONSIDER this to be the reason why there are not many who are more spiritual ; for as they do not correspond in their actions with so great a favour, and do not re-dispose themselves for receiving it, but rather take out of our Lord's hands the will which He already considered His own, and apply it to vile things ; so He goes seeking for some who love Him, in order to give them *more*, though He does not altogether take away that which He gave the others, when they live with a good conscience.

St Teresa.

WEDNESDAY

THAT thou mayest be acquainted with interior and true humility, know that it doth not consist in external acts, in taking the lowest place, in going poor in clothes, in speaking submissively, in shutting the eyes, nor in condemning thy ways, calling thyself miserable, to give others to understand that thou art humble. It consists only in the contempt of thyself, and the desire to be despised, with a low and profound knowledge, without concerning thyself whether thou art esteemed humble or not, though an angel should reveal such a thing to thee.

Molinos.

TO speak forth the hidden things of God is rather rashness, than devotion, for they are to be adored, and we ought to tremble before them, but not to babble them out. Some indeed do freely meddle with them even by talking of them, but he that is humble, adoreth them with an humble voice. For though one does understand some profound meaning, yet it always reveals itself to be more profound. The essence of a thing is too worthy to be expressed in words.

Matthew Weyer.

THURSDAY

SOMETIMES the Lord gives greater light to the understanding, sometimes greater love to the will. The soul which is in this happy state hath two things to avoid,—the activity of human spirit, and interestedness in contemplation itself. Our human spirit is unwilling to die in itself, but loveth to be doing and discoursing after its way, being in love with its own actions. And secondly the soul must procure in itself a perfect divesting of all which is not God, without seeking any other end or interest, within or without, but the Divine will.

Molinos.

WHEN a man knows that he is to omit this or that, and yet commits it, his prayers for more sublime gifts are not heard, for he lifts not up pure hands. Because so long as he layeth not aside inferior things, he receiveth no virtue to omit higher things. As long as he hath not as yet done or omitted that which he acknowledgeth is to be omitted or done by him, so long are hid from him the doing or omitting of more sublime things, nor can they be acknowledged by him. But if he hath been faithful in lower matters, he shall be advanced to higher: if some things are to be renounced by a man, and yet he will not renounce them, then although he prayeth, yet is he not heard, but is forced to depart empty-handed.

Matthew Weyer.

FRIDAY

HOLD it for a true maxim that nobody can do a grievance or injury to a soul despised by itself, and one that is nothing in its own account.

Molinos.

TRUE humility is not attended with trouble ; it does not disturb the soul ; it causes neither darkness nor dryness : on the contrary, it consoles, bringing with it calm, sweetness and light. It is no doubt painful ; but on the other hand, it is consoling, because we see how great is the mercy of our Lord in allowing the soul to have that pain. On the one hand, the soul grieves over its offences against God : on the other, His compassion makes it glad. It has light, which makes it ashamed of itself ; and it gives thanks to His Majesty, who has borne with it so long. The other humility, which is the work of Satan, furnishes no light for any good work ; it pictures God as bringing upon every thing fire and sword : it dwells upon His justice ; and the soul's faith in the mercy of God—for the power of the devil does not reach so far as to destroy faith—is of such a nature as to give no consolation : on the contrary, the consideration of mercies so great, helps to increase the pain, because it looks upon itself as bound to render greater service.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

WHATEVER comes from the Gods to the man who is beloved by the Gods will all be the best possible, unless he has some necessary ill from former miscarriage. Hence, if the just man happens to be in poverty, or disease, or in any other of those seeming evils, these things issue to him in something good either whilst alive or dead. For never at any time is he neglected by the Gods, who inclines earnestly to endeavour to become just, and practises virtue, as far as it is possible for man to resemble God. *Plato.*

THOU must know that this fabric of annihilation hath its foundation but in two principles. The first is, To keep one's self and all worldly things in a low esteem and value. The second principle must be a great esteem of God, to love, adore and follow Him without the least interest of one's own, let it be never so holy. From these two principles will arise a full conformity to the Divine will. This powerful and practical conformity to the Divine will in all things leads the soul to annihilation and transformation with God. *Molinos.*

Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

THE stones that are appointed for that glorious temple above, are hewn, and polished, and prepared for it here, as the stones were wrought and prepared in the mountains for building the temple of Jerusalem.

Archbp. Leighton.

THUS I understood that what man or woman with firm will chooseth God in this life, for love, he may be sure that he is loved without end : which endless love worketh in him that grace. For He willeth that we be as assured in hope of the bliss of heaven while we are here, as we shall be in sureness while we are there.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

LASTLY, although the soul walks, unstayed by any special interior mental light, or exterior guide, to sustain and encourage her on this lofty road, since the darkness of this night deprives her of all such aid ; still her Love and Faith which ever, like a beacon, light her way, and constantly importune her heart with thought of her Belovèd, urge and guide her forward, and make her to fleet swiftly towards her God on this lonely solitary road, although she knows not how, nor in what way.

St John of the Cross.

MONDAY

IT often happens that when a man is spending all his efforts on something, and it does not come about in the way or to the end that he wants, his mind falls into weariness and sadness, as if he reflected and said : "It is better for thee to give up this enterprise which thou hast begun and worked on so long, and it is not yet come to an end : and to seek peace and quiet in thy own mind." Then the soul ought to reply boldly, hungering for the honour of God and the salvation of souls, and decline personal consolation, and say : "I will not avoid or flee from labour, for I am not worthy of peace and quiet of mind. Nay, I wish to remain in that state which I have chosen, and manfully to give honour to God with my labour, and my labour to my neighbour." Yet sometimes the devil, to make our enterprises weary us, when we feel little peace of mind, will make a suggestion to the man, saying in his thought : "I am doing more harm in this thing than I am deserving good. So I would gladly run away from it, not on account of the labour, but because I do not want to do harm." O do not yield either to yourself or to the devil, nor believe him, when he puts such thoughts into your heart and mind ; but embrace your labour with gladness and ardent desire, and without any servile fear.

St Catherine of Siena.

TUESDAY

I KNOW well that He who 'has opened the door hitherto shut, will afterwards reveal what is within ; and will shew what we could not have known before, had we not entered in by Christ, through whom alone God is beheld.

Clement of Alexandria.

ALTHOUGH there are spaces in heaven as well as in the world, still nothing there is estimated by spaces, but by states. The first and most essential cause of this is, that the Lord is present with every one according to his love and faith, and that all things appear either near or remote according to His presence ; for from this all things in the heavens are determined.

Swedenborg.

FOR Soul entering into the body of a man if it remain Evil, neither tastes immortality nor partakes of the Good, but retrograde turns its way back to that of the reptiles. And this is the condemnation of an evil soul ; ignorance is the Vice of Soul. For a soul nothing acquainted with The Good, being blind, is entangled with the bodily passions ; and, not having known itself, serves bodies alien and depraved, not ruling but ruled over. Virtue of Soul is knowledge : he that knows is good and pious, and already Divine.

Hermes Trismegistus.

WEDNESDAY

WHEN the Lord said to the younger son, *My son, go and work in the vineyard today*, and he answered: *I go, Lord*: but coming unto the elder, he also said, *Go work in the vineyard*: and he answered, *I will not*: those two sons are but one man. For when a man begins, he will do all, he will suppress sin, purify himself, he will worship, love and adore God, and adhere unto Him. He thinks that he is able to perform all this. But when the business comes to trial, then a man at last apprehendeth that he can scarcely observe the outward show of virtue or righteousness, and that also with much indignation and reluctancy, because he hath not that true essential righteousness and virtue, whence true desire springeth.

Matthew Weyer.

GOD will do all this in thy soul by means of the cross and dryness, if thou freely givest thy consent to it by resignation, and walking through those darksome and desert ways.

Molinos.

THURSDAY

FAITH is a most desolate thing. Just as when many things are reached out to any one, and he catcheth at them, but then they are pulled away again, but at last a door of escape is opened to him, which then he weighs in the balance, and because he doth not see it to be a true going forth, he forthwith lets it go, and waiteth upon the Lord. This faith beholdeth those things which appear not, and which a man knows not whence they are to be taken, for he hopes where there is no hope. The Thief saw Christ naked, hanging next unto him upon the Cross, so that there could appear no kingdom, no salvation, or life to belong unto him : but contrary to all his whole capacity of understanding he did believe that which he did not see. By how much the farther off, and by how much the more incredible the things are which are propounded, by so much the greater is the faith. And by this faith cometh salvation and righteousness above all the understanding, faculty, and capacity of man.

Matthew Weyer.

WHAT is the devil able to effect by imaginations, which he certainly suggests, in order to afflict and intimidate the soul, especially if it be a matter wherein some great good to souls is likely to follow, and conducing much to the service of God ? He weakens faith, for it is a terrible evil not to believe that God is able to perform works which our understandings cannot comprehend.

St Teresa.

FRIDAY

CANST thou not believe ? Then cast all thy sins into the becoming Man, or Incarnation of Christ, into His Spirit, and be in Him as dead ; let Him in thee believe, how or as He will ; why dost thou long take care or perplex thyself about strong faith which overthroweth mountains, it standeth not in thy power to believe so. Only take care about a true, earnest, *sincere* will, go out from sin, and strive against sin in flesh and blood ; desire it no more, become its enemy, have enmity against it ; let God make of thee, and believe in thee as strongly as He will : depend on God, and wrestle with Him as Jacob did the whole night, who then said : “ I will not let Thee go unless Thou bless me ” : and David said : “ Though it continue all the day, and in the night, and again till the morning, yet my heart shall not give over.” This is really to believe above all reason, when the heart receiveth no comfort, and yet dependeth on God ; and saith in the will : Lord, Lord, I will not leave Thee, whether Thou cast me into heaven or hell, I will not forsake Thee ; for Thou art mine, and I am Thine : I will be nothing in Thee, make of me, what Thou wilt.

Jacob Behmen.

SATURDAY

THE prayer of internal recollection may be well typified by that wrestling, which the Holy Scriptures say the patriarch Jacob had all night with God, until day broke, and He blessed him. Wherefore the soul is to persevere, and wrestle with the difficulties that it will find in internal recollection, without desisting, until the sun of internal light begin to appear, and the Lord give it His blessing.

Molinos.

THE Bed was Earth, the raised Pillow Stones,
Whereon poor Jacob rests his Head, his Bones.
Heaven was his Canopy ; the shades of night
Were his drawn Curtains, to exclude the Light ;
Poor state of Isaac's Heir ! It seems to me,
His Cattle found as soft a Bed as he :
Yet God appeared there, his Joy, his Crown ;
God is not always seen in Beds of Down ;
O, if that God shall please to make my Bed,
I care not where I rest my Bones, my Head ;
With Thee, my wants can never prove extreme,
With Jacob's Pillow, give me Jacob's Dream.

Quarles.

Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

SO when the Sun of righteousness
 Did once appear,
 That Scene was changed, and a new dresse
 Left for us here ;
 Veiles became useles, Altars fell,
 Fires smoking die ;
 And all that sacred pomp, and shell
 Of things did flie.
 Then did He shine forth, whose sad fall,
 And bitter fights
 Were figur'd in those mystical
 And Cloudie Rites ;
 And as i' th' natural Sun, these three,
 Light, motion, heat,
 So are now *Faith, Hope, Charity*
 Through him Compleat ;
 Faith spans up blisse ; what sin and death
 Put us quite from,
 Lest we should run for't out of breath,
 Faith brings us home ;
 So that I need no more, but say
 I do believe,
 And my most loving Lord straitway
 Doth answer, *Live !*
Henry Vaughan

MONDAY

LORD, 'tis a common course ; we're apt and free
 To take the best, and leave the worst to Thee
 We fleet the Mornings for our own Design,
 Perchance the flotten Afternoon is Thine ;
 Thou giv'st us Silk, we give Thee Camel's Hair,
 Thy Blessings march i' th' Front, our Thanks i' th'
 Rear.

Quarles.

IT is both a miserie and a shame for a man to be
 Bankrupt in love : which he may easily pay, and
 be never the more impoverished. I will be in no
 man's debt for good will ; but will at least return
 every man his owne measure, if not with usurie. It
 is much better to be a Creditor, than a Debtor in
 any thing : but especially of this : Yet of this I will
 so be content to be a Debtor, that I will alwayes be
 paying it where I owe it ; and yet never will have so
 paid it that I shall not owe it more.

Bishop Hall.

O GIVE me then a thankful heart ! a heart
 After thy own, not mine ;
 So after thine, that all and ev'ry part
 Of mine may wait on thine ;
 O hear ! yet not my tears alone,
 Hear now a floud,
 A floud that drowns both tears and grones,
 My Saviour's blood.

Henry Vaughan.

TUESDAY

SOME think it humility not to believe that God is bestowing His gifts upon them. Let us clearly understand this, and that it is perfectly clear God bestows His gifts without any merit whatever on our part ; and let us be grateful to His Majesty for them ; for if we do not recognise the gifts received at His hands, we shall never be moved to love Him. It is a most certain truth, that the richer we see ourselves to be, confessing at the same time our poverty, the greater will be our progress, and the more real our humility. An opposite course tends to take away all courage ; for we shall think ourselves incapable of great blessings, if we begin to frighten ourselves with the dread of vain-glory when our Lord begins to show His mercy upon us. Let us believe that He Who gives these gifts will also, when the devil begins to tempt us herein, give us the grace to detect him, and the strength to resist him, and He will do so if we walk in simplicity before God, aiming at pleasing Him only, and not men. It is a most evident truth, that our love for a person is greater, the more distinctly we remember the good he has done us.

St Teresa.

WEDNESDAY

HE courts our love with infinite esteem,
 And seeks it so that it doth almost seem
 Even all His blessedness. His love doth prize
 It as the only Sacrifice.

'Tis death, my Soul, to be indifferent,
 Set forth thyself unto thy whole extent,
 And all the glory of His passion prize,
 Who for thee lives, who for thee dies.

There is no goodness nor desert in thee,
 For which thy love so coveted should be ;
 His goodness is the fountain of thy worth,—
 O live to love and set it forth.

Thou nothing giv'st to Him, He gave all things
 To thee, and made thee like the King of Kings.
 His love the fountain is of Heaven and Earth,
 The cause of all thy joy and mirth.

Thy love is nothing but itself, and yet
 So infinite is His that He doth set
 A value infinite upon it. Oh !

This, canst thou careless be, and know !

Traherne.

THURSDAY

THOU art the source and centre of all minds,
 Their only point of rest, eternal Word !
 From Thee departing, they are lost and rove
 At random, without honour, hope, or peace.
 From Thee is all that soothes the life of man.
 His high endeavour, and his glad success,
 His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
 But oh ! Thou bounteous Giver of all good,
 Thou art of all Thy gifts Thyself the crown !
 Give what Thou canst, without Thee we are poor,
 And with Thee rich, take what Thou wilt away.

Cowper.

SON, I ought to be thy supreme and final end, if
 thou desire to be truly blessed. By this in-
 tention thy affection will be purified, which is too
 often perversely warped to itself and created things.
 For if thou seekest thyself in anything, immediately
 thou art faint and dry within. Refer therefore all
 things to Me as their Author ; for I am He who
 gave them all. Think of them one by one as flow-
 ing from the Highest Good ; and therefore unto Me,
 as their source, must all be traced.

Thomas à Kempis.

FRIDAY

THE seeds of The God are few, but great, and both beautiful and good : Virtue, and Temperance, and Piety. But Piety is Knowledge of God, which he who recogniseth, becoming full of all the good things, possesses the divine thoughts, and not like the many. Because of this, those being in knowledge, neither please the many, nor the many them ; they seem to be mad, and occasion laughter, and being hated and despised, and perhaps murdered. For we have said that wickedness must dwell here, being in its own region : for its region is the earth, not the World as some may say, blaspheming. But the God-fearing man will condemn all things, perceiving the knowledge. For all things to such an one, although to others the evil, are good ; and taking counsel, he refers all things unto the Knowledge, and what is wonderful, alone renders the evils good.

Hermes Trismegistus.

ENDEAVOUR therefore, sisters, as much as you can, so to conduct yourselves to all persons with whom you may have to speak, that they may love your conversation, and admire your manner of life and discourse, and that they may not be terrified at virtue. This is of great importance for religious women.

St Teresa.

SATURDAY

ALL things do first receive, that give,
 Only 'tis God above,
 That from and in Himself doth live ;
 Whose all sufficient love
 Without original can flow
 And all the joys and glories shew
 Which mortal man can take delight to know.
 He is the primitive eternal spring,
 The endless ocean of each glorious thing.
 The Soul a vessel is,
 A spacious bosom to contain
 All the fair treasures of His bliss,
 Which run like Rivers from, into the main,
 And all it doth receive returns again.

Traherne.

THE rule of policy is, if any thing be doubtful,
 always to suspect the worst. But it is the
 height of religion to imagine the *best*, and to make a
 good construction. It is noble and generous to
 make a candid interpretation, where words and actions
 may incline to the contrary ; for an interpretation of
 grace and favour doth mend the quality of the action,
 and obligeth the party. And this is a noble way of
 overcoming a man.

Whichcote.

Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity

MY God and Gold cannot possess one heart :
 My God and I, or Gold and I, must part.
Quarles.

WHAT shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? said our Saviour, who was to lay down a ransom for it, and knew well that it would cost infinitely more than the world was worth. Yet the most of men value their own souls at a far lower rate than the whole world, losing them for broken morsels of it; yea, many times for vain hopes that are never accomplished. And as these men make a miserable bargain, so, by the contrary, they that lose the world, or anything worldly, yea, though it were the whole, to save their souls, make a profitable loss of it. *Archbp. Leighton.*

THE whole round world is not enough to fill
 The heart's three corners, but it craveth still ;
 Only the Trinity that made it can
 Suffice the vast triangled heart of man. *Quarles.*

MONDAY

IF, however, some one should blame wealth and poverty, and the inequality in the dispensation of every thing of this kind, in the first place, such a one is ignorant that the worthy man does not seek for equality in such like particulars ; nor is of opinion that those who possess many things have more of good : nor that rulers are better than private individuals, but suffer others to make such things as these the objects of their pursuit. He also knows that the present life is twofold, the one being that of worthy men, but the other that of the multitude. And that the life of worthy men tends to the summit, and that which is on high ; but that the life which is merely human is again twofold, the one kind being mindful of virtue, and participating of a certain good, but the other pertaining to the vile rabble, and to artificers, who administer to the necessities of more worthy men. But if one man slays another, or is vanquished by pleasure, through imbecility of mind, what is there wonderful in this, since the guilt is not in intellect, but in souls that are of a puerile nature ?

Plotinus.

TUESDAY

IN the world, little thought is given to self-love, but only to that elation of mind in externals which is called pride, and this, because it is manifest to the sight is alone believed to be self-love. Moreover, self-love, when it does not so display itself, is believed in the world to be the fire of life, by which man is excited to seek employment, and to perform uses ; and unless he could see honour and glory in them that his mind would grow torpid. *Swedenborg.*

WHILE men's minds are perpetually rambling all the world over in a pursuit of worldly designs, they are unacquainted with the affairs of their own souls. *John Smith.*

LORD GOD ! I beg not friends, nor wealth,
 But pray against them both ;
 Three things I'de have, my soule's chief health,
 And one of these semes loath,
 A living FAITH, a HEART of flesh,
 The WORLD an Enemie ;
 This last will keepe the first twq fresh,
 And bring me where I'de be.

Henry Vaughan.

WEDNESDAY

CERTAINLY poverty is man's best and his true estate. Riches, though they make themselves wings, yet do they not fly to heaven. The home or house of gold is the heart of the earth, and minerals are a fuel of hell-fire. Poverty was the inauguration of the first man, who was made naked ; and all his posterity are born so. By covetousness we lose our uprightness. We come here light and easy, but we load ourselves afterwards with unnecessary burthens. These weights that we take up sink us down. Our temporal misery, as well as the eternal, is from ourselves. The merriest creature, that I can see, is the sparrow. This makes me think that he is not troubled with forethoughts, which are the hands of covetousness. What man and beasts scatter and leave behind them is his provision : his table is laid everywhere, and the first bush he meets with is his bed. Our Saviour, Who knew the nature and thoughts of all created things, was pleased to send us to school to the birds. They are always full of musical liveliness, and a certain bright freedom which descends not so low as men and beasts.

Henry Vaughan.

THURSDAY

MY interpreter said : " Possessions and merchandise, my good fellow, are a fine thing. To obtain these, a man must ever risk his life." Then I said : " Am I, then, a beast, that I should risk my life merely for the sake of my body, and for the purpose of collecting things for it ? Verily indeed, even the beasts do not this, and man, possessing within him a superior thing, namely, the soul, should seek rather its advantage and pleasure." *Comenius.*

HOW wilt thou answer Riches if she say to thee, " Why dost thou reproach me, O Mind ? Why art thou enraged against me ? In what have I angered thee ? 'Twas thou that first desiredst me, not I thee ; thou didst set me on the throne of thy Creator, when thou lookedst to me for the good thou shouldst seek from Him. Thou sayest I have deceived thee, but I may rather answer thou hast deceived me, seeing that by reason of thy lust and thy greed the Creator of all things hath been forced to turn away from me. Thou art indeed more guilty than I, both for thine own wicked lusts, and because owing to thee, I am not able to do the will of my Maker. He lent me to thee to enjoy in accordance with His commandments, and not to perform the will of thine unlawful greed." *Boethius.*

FRIDAY

IT is a very great evil to make God a *mean*, and the world an *end*: to name God, and to intend the world.

Whichcote.

WHENSOEVER a man desireth anything inordinately; he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest; the poor and humble in spirit walk in a multitude of peace. The weak in spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and inclined to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted when he would withdraw himself; and is easily made angry if any one thwart his wish.

Thomas à Kempis.

THAT love of God which moves us to indifference to self makes us citizens of the Heavenly Jerusalem; that love of self which renders us indifferent to God makes us slaves of Babylon.

St Francis de Sales.

AT the last day, when all things come to be laid bare and open, it will be an everlasting sorrow to think of the endless variety of things that have come between us and God, and how we have been entangled in mean bondage to our own ways and habits.

Tauler.

SATURDAY

WHY, thinkest thou, do infinite numbers of souls hinder the abundant current of the Divine gifts? It is only because they would be doing something, and have a desire to be great; all this is to depart from internal humility, and from their own nothingness; and therefore they prevent those wonders which that Infinite Goodness would work in them. They betake themselves to the very gifts of the spirit, and there they stick, that they may come out from the centre of nothingness, and so the whole work is spoiled. They seek not God with truth, and therefore they find Him not; for know thou must that there is no finding of Him but in the undervaluing of our ourselves and in nothingness. We seek ourselves every time we get out of our nothingness; and therefore we never get to quiet and perfect contemplation. Creep in, as far as ever thou canst into the truth of thy nothingness, and then nothing will disquiet thee; nay, thou wilt be humble and ashamed, willing to lose openly thy reputation and esteem.

Molinos.

Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity

ILLUMINATION is never brought to pass in a man unless first he be purified : for illumination must be expected to follow purification, until the very last point of impurity be perfectly purged out.

Matthew Weyer.

PURITY of things is an unmixture and simplicity corresponding with their own being ; and so is the soul when elevated above the earth and sense, and united unto God, contemplating Him, and delighting in Him : all inordinate bent to the creatures, or to itself, (which is the first and main disorder,) doth defile and debase it : and the more it is sublimed and freed from itself, the purer and more heavenly it grows, and partakes the more of God, and resembles Him the more. Now, our cleansing is to be managed by all holy means : word and sacrament more wisely and spiritually used than commonly with us : and private prayer, that purifies and elevates the soul, takes it up into the mount, and makes it shine ; and particularly supplicating for the spirit of holiness, and victory over sin, is not in vain, it obtains its desires of God, the soul becoming that which it is fixedly set upon.

Archbp. Leighton.

MONDAY

THE undivided companion and undoubted helper and preserver of this confidence of faith, is an active love to Christ, a constant study of holiness, and strife against sin, which is the grand enemy of faith, that obstructs the very vital spirits of faith, that makes it sickly and heavy in its actings, and causes the palsy in the hand of faith, that it cannot lay so fast hold. Therefore this you would be careful of, yea know that of necessity it attends faith, and, as faith grows, holiness will grow, and holiness growing will mutually strengthen and establish faith. The comforts of the Holy Ghost are holy, purifying comforts: and the more the soul is purified and made holy, the more it is cleared and enlarged, to receive much of these comforts. *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God*; unholiness is as damp and filthy mists in the soul, it darkens all.

Archbp. Leighton.

WHEN a soul, with a sincere and perfect will truly turns from all that is not God, but cannot find in itself any means of wholly and fully freeing and purifying itself from all adhesions and roots of sin and self-ness, and is heartily willing rather today than tomorrow, to be made whole from these; and to this end gives itself up to God and the working of His Spirit, holding itself still under this, whatever it may cost it inwardly and outwardly, a soul so disposed need not fear to fall into a spurious peace and resignation.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

K NOW in verity, the Most Holy hath no pleasure to see His own in this world to live and walk up and down in so mean a capacity, unable to stir a foot or hand to what lieth in the Divine Root. Which you may lawfully stir up, since for you, Christ the Lord hath made the way, by ascending on high, for to subdue all things under Him ; that so of the same power He might pass away from Himself and you. Who calleth you to draw out the purchase of His Death, by like dying, and by like immortal living, according to the penetrating quality. Which by stirring up, may effect thereby great and mighty things, answerably to the wisdom and sovereignty of holiness, which all as in inclosure doth lie about this holy thing for you. You little know what a principality is nigh to you : but your will hath yet somewhat that doth clog its wheel, which is designed for to be the running chariot, whereunto the Spirit of Infinite Might must join. Now then by all means, seek the unthralling of your will ; for could nothing mingle therewithal, but what did fall from the pure Deity, how would you find God all-active in and through you ! But herein lieth the great nicety to keep the will-spirit untouched, that nothing from the briery root doth twist about it ; if this is kept spotless and free, what may you not find power to do with the Most Holy.

Jane Lead.

WEDNESDAY

MY Sins are like the Sands upon the Shore,
 Which every Ebb lays open to the eye ;
 In this they differ ; These are cover'd o'er
 With every Flood ; my sins shall open lie.
 If thou wilt make mine eyes a Sea of Tears,
 O, they will hide the sins of all my Years.

Quarles.

SIN separates and hides His face not only from people that professes His name, but even from soul that really bears His name stamped upon it. Though it cannot fully and for ever cut off such soul, yet in part, and for a time it may, yea to be sure, it will separate, and hide the face of God from them. Their daily inevitable frailties do not thin but either a course of careless walking, and many little unlawful liberties taken to themselves, that will rise and gather as a cloud and hide the face of God or some one gross sin, especially if often reiterated will prove as a firm stone-wall, or rather as a brazen wall, built up by their own hands betwixt them and heaven, and will not be so easily dissolved or broken down ; and yet, till that be, the light of His countenance, who is the life of the soul, will be eclipsed and withheld from it.

Archbp. Leighton.

THURSDAY

BUT if thou shouldest shut up the Soul of thee in the body, and debase it, and say, I understand nothing, I can nothing, I fear the sea, I am not able to ascend into the Heaven, I know not who I have been, I know not who I shall be ; what with thee, and with The God ? for thou canst understand nothing of things beautiful and good, being a lover of the body, and evil. For the complete evil is the being ignorant of the Divinity ; but the being able to have known and to will and to hope, is the right way, peculiar of the good, and smooth, and easy ; journeying, He will meet thee every where, every where will He be seen, where and when thou dost not expect ; watching, sleeping, sailing, journeying by night, by day, speaking, silent ; for there is nothing which is not image of the Divinity.

—Is The God invisible ?—

Speak well ! And who is more manifest than He ? For this very thing He made all things, that thou mayest discern Him throughout all things. This is The Good of The God, this is His virtue, that He is apparent throughout all things. For nothing is invisible, not even of the incorporeal. Mind is seen in the understanding, The God in the making.

Hermes Trismegistus.

FRIDAY

AS we say, There would be no Thieves if no Receivers : so would there not be so many open mouths to detract and slander, if there were not so many open eares to entertain them.

Bishop Hall.

EARTHLY-MINDEDNESS likewise is an impurity of the soul.

Archbp. Leighton.

I LOST my lamp because the thief was better at keeping awake than I. But he bought a lamp at the price of being a thief, a rogue, and a wild beast. This seemed to him a good bargain, and much good may it do him !

Epictetus.

AS iron thrust into the fire loses its rust, and becomes white-hot throughout, so he that wholly turns himself unto God puts off all sloth, and is transformed into a new man. When a man begins to grow cold, then he is afraid of a little labour, and gladly receives external comfort. But when he begins to master himself perfectly, and to walk like a man in the way of God, then he thinks less of those things which before he found so hard.

Thomas à Kempis.

SATURDAY

TO a man once purified, there is yet need of a closer purification, and after that of another yet more close. Death and corruption do ascend as the increase ascendeth. Let no man think that he who hath a certainty of eternal life hath therefore no need to suffer. It is written, *Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth is My Footstool*. When therefore the mind of a man is the Heaven and throne of God, then God useth his flesh as subjected unto Himself, and for His footstool. There were given to the Woman in the Revelation, two wings, that she should fly away into the Wilderness, from before the face of the Dragon : but the Dragon went forth, and fought with her seed ; those are such men as are not yet set fully at liberty.

Matthew Weyer.

THE highest beauty of the soul, the very image of God upon it, is holiness : he that is aspiring to it himself is upon a most excellent design : and if he can do anything to excite and call up others to it, performs a work of the greatest charity.

Archbp. Leighton.

Sebenteenth Sunday after Trinity

LISTEN to God, and follow His inward voice of grace, that is all. But to listen, one must be silent : and to follow, one must yield. *Fénelon.*

GOD is ever with me, ever before me. I know He cannot but over-see me alwayes, though my eyes be held, that I see Him not ; yea, He is still within me, though I feele Him not : neyther is there any moment, that I can live without God. Why do I not, therefore, alwayes live with Him ? Why do I not account all Houres lost, wherein I enjoy Him not ? *Bishop Hall.*

WHAT hinders that we be not as deeply versed in the Love of God as St Augustine, St Francis or St Catherine of Genoa ? Because God has not given us such grace. But why has He not given it to us ? Because we have not worthily corresponded to His inspirations. Wherefore have we not corresponded ? Because, being free, we have abused our freedom. " Surely," says S. Teresa, " the fault lie not with God, for if His Divine Majesty gives us grace to arrive so far, I think He would not fail to give us more, save for the hindrances we raise by our own faults." *St Francis de Sales.*

MONDAY

THY blessed Saviour says to thee this and every day : Deny thyself where thou findest thyself. Dost thou find thyself in love, desire, confidence in any created thing outside God ; dost thou find thyself in self-pleasing, and self-love, in natural, yea even in spiritual and godly things, then deny thyself. Live not according to thine own inclination, will, and desire, but rather go against them in thy speaking and acting, going and remaining, eating and drinking etc. but not to the point of injury to health. Pray incessantly for grace, wisdom and power ; and take up thy cross. Thou mayst not make one for thyself ; only take it up ; it will surely be laid upon thee, either by the world, when it mocks and hinders thee ; or by Satan, when he plagues thee with temptations, strifes, evil inclinations and thoughts ; or by God and His Providence, through pain, sickness, countless contrarieties, through spiritual withdrawals, deprivation of His mightily working power, and other trials ; or lastly by thyself, through the disorder of thy nature, the corruption of thy flesh, through the sense of thy weakness and unrelia- bleness, yea even through sins, so far as thou hast fallen involuntarily.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

MAN is changeable in this life, and by frailty and overcoming falleth into sin : he is weak and unwise of himself, and also his will is overlaid. And in this time he is in tempest and in sorrow and woe : and the cause is blindness : for he seeth not God. For if he saw God continually, he should have no mischievous feeling, nor any manner of motion or yearning that serveth to sin.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

O GIVE me Grace to see Thy face, and be
A constant Mirror of Eternity.

Let my pure Soul, transformed to a thought
Attend upon Thy Throne, and, as it ought,
Spend all its time in feeding on Thy love,
And never from Thy sacred presence move.
So shall my conversation ever be

In Heaven, and I, O Lord my God, with Thee !

Traherne.

WEDNESDAY

LO in the Cross is all, and in dying is all; and there is no other way to life and true inward peace but the way of the holy Cross, and of daily mortification. Walk where thou wilt, seek what thou wilt, thou wilt find no higher way above, nor safer way below, than the way of the holy Cross. Dispose and order all things as thou wilt, and seest ; yet shalt thou only learn that thou must always suffer, willingly or unwillingly ; and so shalt thou always find the Cross.

Thomas à Kempis.

NO one must imagine, although it sounds hard, and at first may seem hard, that it is really hard to arrive at the surrendering and dying to all things. But when this is really reached, then no life is easier, nor sweeter, nor more cheerful ; for God gives Himself great trouble to be unceasingly with such a man, and to teach him how he may be brought to Himself, when he would be following Him in other ways. No man ever busied himself so greatly over anything, as God busies Himself over bringing a man to know Him. God is always ready, but we are so unready ; God is near to us, but we are far from Him ; God is within, but we are without.

Eckhart.

THURSDAY

WHEN night comes, lift thy deeds, make plain
the way

'Twixt heaven and thee ; block it not with delays ;

But perfect all before thou sleep'st ; Then say

Ther's one Sun more strung on my Bead of days.

What's good, score up for Joy ; the bad, well scann'd,

Wash off with tears, and get thy Master's hand.

Henry Vaughan.

HE to whom the Eternal Word speaks, is freed
from many opinions. From one Word are all
things, and all things speak that one ; and this is the
Beginning, which also speaks to us. No man without
that Word understands, or judges aright. He to
whom all things are one, he who draws all things to
one, and sees all things in one, may be established in
heart, and rest as a peacemaker in God. O God
who art Truth, make me one with Thee in ever-
lasting charity.

Thomas à Kempis.

FRIDAY

WHEN a soul always remains in one state, I do not consider it safe ; nor does it seem to me possible that the spirit of God should, during this exile, continue always in the same state.

St Teresa.

EARTH in which sins have been planted, is always ready to receive them again, if self-will puts them there with free choice.

St Catherine of Siena.

BEHOLD I offered Myself up wholly unto My Father for thee ; I have given also My whole Body and Blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and that thou mightest continue Mine to the end. But if thou stand upon thyself and dost not offer thyself up freely unto My will, the oblation is not complete, nor will there be full union between us. Therefore a free offering up of thyself into the hands of God ought to go before all thy works, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this is why so few are made illuminated and inwardly free : because they cannot wholly deny themselves. My sentence standeth sure : Unless a man forsake all, he cannot be My disciple.

Thomas à Kempis.

SATURDAY

CHRISTIAN doctrine sets before us plainly the truths which God requires us to believe, the good He wills us to hope, the evil He wills us to fear, the things He would have us fear or desire, the commandments He wills us to keep, the counsels to be followed ; and all these combined make what we call God's signified Will, because He has signified and manifested that He intends these things to be believed and done. Now this signified Will being set before us as what He wishes, rather than by peremptory constraint, we are free to follow His Will obediently, or to resist it by disobedience. There are three distinct acts of God's Will that apply to this ; namely, He wills us to have the power to resist, He wishes us not to resist, and yet He suffers our resistance if we will have it so. The power to resist is part of our natural liberty ; if we do resist, it comes of our own malice, but that we should not resist is what God would have of us. When we do resist, God has no share in our disobedience, but leaving us to our free-will, He permits us to choose it. But when we obey, then He furthers us with His helping Grace.

St Francis de Sales.

Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity

HAST thou forsaken all thy Sins but One ?
 Believe it, then, my Friend, thou hast forsaken
 None. *Quarles.*

THE reason why men of the world find such difficulty in reducing their affections and appetites to obey prudence and reason, is because they have not reduced their prudence and their reason to the obedience of God. Do you desire to hold your affections and appetites subject ? Yield first obedience to God, replace in the scabbard your prudence and your reason, do not suffer yourselves to be ruled or governed in anything by them, trust unreservedly in God's word, hold it to be sure and firm, and wait expectantly for inspirations from God.
Juan de Valdés.

[INDEED travail in the sweat of my brow. I am racked with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations ; and there is none to help, none to deliver and save, but Thou, O Lord God my Saviour ; to whom I commit myself and all that is mine, that Thou mayest keep watch over me, and bring me safe to life eternal.

Thomas à Kempis.

MONDAY

IT is not possible to arrive at perfect liberty of heart, but by the special mercy of God, to which also are to be joined our unwearied endeavours and prayers ; For we have so encompassed ourselves about with such a wall of separation, that we want the true discerning of our intellect by reason of that thick darkness, wherewith our senses are deeply benighted ; whence it is, that we always place without ourselves the cause of our holding back, and of our barrenness, and complain that we are hindered and over-ruled by things external ; the contrary of which, if things proceeded aright, and we were sound at the bottom of our hearts, would come to pass ; so as that which is internal would contain and rule in due order, all externals ; nor would it be hindered by anything external ; and thus all would prove well for our use and advantage in the Lord. But the Lord will much better inform us in these matters, and effectually cause that if any temporal things that are less necessary, become a burden unto us, that we shall lay them aside, so far forth as it is allowed to us by our conscience in the Lord, yet not without a more exact consideration thereof.

Matthew Weyer.

TUESDAY

KNOWLEDGE, to speak generally, a perfecting of man as man, is consummated by acquaintance with divine things in character, life and word, accordant and conformable to itself and the divine Word.
Clement of Alexandria.

'**T**IS not the object, but the light
That maketh Heaven ; 'tis a purer sight.
Felicity
Appears to none but them that purely see.

A disentangled and a naked sense,
A mind that's unpossessed,
A disengaged breast,
An empty and a quick intelligence
Acquainted with the golden mean,
An even spirit pure and serene,
Is that where Beauty, Excellence,
And Pleasure keep their Court of Residence :
My Soul retire,
Get free, and so thou shalt even all admire.
Traherne.

WEDNESDAY

BUT thou wilt say that it is not the work of the devil when he molests thee by means of creatures, but the effects of thy neighbours' faults and malice, in having wronged and injured thee. Know that this is another cunning and hidden temptation, because though God wills not the sin of another, yet He wills His own effects in thee, and the trouble which accrues to thee from another's fault, that He may see thee improved by the benefit of patience. Dost thou receive injury from any man? There are two things in it : the sin of him that doeth it, and the punishment that thou sufferest ; the sin against the will of God, and displeases Him, though He permits it ; the punishment is conform to His will, and He wills it for thy good : wherefore thou oughtest to receive it as from His hand. The Passion and Death of our Lord Christ were the effects of the wickedness and sins of Pilate ; and yet it is certain that God willed the death of His own Son for our redemption. Consider how the Lord makes use of another's fault for the good of thy soul. O the greatness of the Divine Wisdom ! Who can pry into the depths of the secret and extraordinary means, and the hidden parts whereby He guides the soul, which He would have purged, transformed, and deified ?

Molinos.

THURSDAY

WHERE faith is, there is the promise and the consummation, and the promise is rest. So that in illumination, what we receive is knowledge, and the end of knowledge is rest,—the last thing conceived as the object of aspiration. Knowledge then, is the illumination we receive, which makes ignorance disappear, and endows us with clear vision. Further, the abandonment of what is bad is the adopting of what is better.

Clement of Alexandria.

TEAR not thy plumage off, it cannot be replaced ;
 Disfigure not thy face in wantonness, O fair one !
 That face which is bright as the forenoon sun—
 To disfigure it were a grievous sin.
 'Twere paganism to mar such a face as thine !
 The moon itself would weep to lose sight of it !
 Knowest thou not the beauty of thine own face ?
 Quit this temper that leads thee to war with thyself !
 It is the claws of thine own foolish thoughts
 That in spite wound the face of thy quiet soul.
 Know such thoughts to be claws fraught with poison,
 Which score deep wounds on the face of thy soul.

From the "Masnavi," trans. by E. H. Whinfield.

FRIDAY

THOUGHTS are the Angels which we send abroad
 To visit all the parts of God's abode.

Thoughts are the things wherein we all confess

The quintessence of Sin and Holiness

Is laid. All wisdom in a Thought doth shine,

By Thoughts alone the Soul is made divine.

Thoughts are the springs of all our actions here

On Earth, tho' they themselves do not appear.

They are the springs of Beauty, Order, Peace,

The city's gallantries, the fields' increase.

Rule, Government, and Kingdoms flow from them,

And so doth all the new Jerusalem,

At least the Glory, Splendour, and Delight,

For 'tis by Thoughts that even she is bright.

Thoughts are the things wherewith even God is crowned

And as the Soul without them's useless found,

So are all other creatures too. A Thought

Is even the very cream of all He wrought.

All Holy fear, and Love, and Reverence,

With Honour, Joy and Praise, as well as Sense,

Are hidden in our thoughts. Thoughts are the things

That us affect : The honey and the stings

Of all that is are seated in a Thought,

Even while it seemeth weak, and next to nought.

The matter of all pleasure, virtue, worth,

Grief, anger, hate, revenge, which words set forth,

Are Thoughts alone.

Traherne.

SATURDAY

THOUGHTS are the highest things,
 The very offspring of the King of Kings.
 Thoughts are a kind of strange Celestial Creature
 That when they're good, they're such in every feature,
 They bear the image of their Father's face,
 And beautify even all His dwelling-place.

The best of Thoughts is yet a thing unknown,
 But when 'tis perfect it is like His own :
 Intelligible, Endless, yet a sphere
 Substantial too : In which all things appear
 All worlds, all excellencies, senses, graces,
 Joys, pleasures, creatures, and the Angels' faces.
 It shall be married ever unto all,
 And all embrace, tho' now it seemeth small.
 A Thought, my Soul, may omnipresent be,
 For all it toucheth which a thought can see.
 O that mysterious Being ! Thoughts are Things
 Which rightly used make His creatures Kings.

Traherne.

LET us be ready to hinder other men's sins and
 harms. If men themselves be not faulty or
 hurt, they are apt to lay aside thought and care :
 whereas God's dishonour and our neighbour's hurt
 ought to affect us.

Whichcote.

Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

YET Lord, restore Thine image, heare my call :
 And though my hard heart scarce to Thee can
 grone,
 Remember that Thou once didst write in stone
George Herbert.

I UNHAPPILY experience in myself, and you will also find how easily and imperceptibly we let ourselves be enticed and enthralled by other things seemingly good, yet which do not tend towards the one thing needful ; and by which the mind is led into great disturbance, darkness, and estrangement from the Lord. May the Lord make us careful in this matter, that we may in no wise hinder His work in us during these short days of ours. We know indeed that every thing is within the almighty power of His Grace, which alone can lead us to the true death to ourselves and all else, and to the true life of the spirit, consisting in fellowship with God. But most certainly does He only reveal this power in the still and quiet mind, or in those who long for it, and busy themselves to gain it. It seems to me that the Lord would do great wonders in us if we would stay in His school, and let Him work in us unhindered. To this has the Lord called us, by His mercy, and redeemed from the world to be wholly for Him, and to live with Him the ground of the heart.

Tersteegen.

MONDAY

I CAN nowhere find in Scripture that justice in God doth import a necessity that lies upon God in respect of any perfection inherent in Him, to punish. It is true, God is just if He do punish sin, but God is not unjust if He do not punish the sin that is repented of ; He punisheth if He pleaseth, and He hath patience where He wills, and He doth suspend and forbear and forgive upon the sinner's repentance ; but I can nowhere find in Scripture what may give any security to contumacy in sin, and impenitence ; for such a sinner lies always open to God's severity. And this distinction is of great use. It is just to punish, but no necessity lies upon God to punish, if there be repentance. The use of this notion is this : this knowledge highly tends to animate and encourage those that fall, to rise by repentance ; and this doth keep in awe presumption, contumacy, and profaneness ; and those that take leave to transgress the rule of right, to do right and wrong indifferently, these persons, they are always in danger, always lie open to God's severity ; yea, the goodness of God is engaged to controul them. God of His goodness doth punish contumacy : God of His justice and righteousness doth compassionate those that are penitent.

Whichcote.

TUESDAY

IN one 'twas said, "Leave power and weakness
alone :

Whatever withdraws thine eyes from God is an idol,"

In one 'twas said, "Quench not thy earthy torch,
That it may be a light to lighten mankind.

If thou neglectest regard and care for it,

Thou wilt quench at midnight the lamp of Union."

From the "Masnavi," trans. by E. H. Whinfield.

THE most earthly actions may be supernaturalised by being performed in the spirit of love. We may eat, offering the act to God, as sustaining the body He has given to do His service ; we may rejoice in friendship, because God has given our friends to be our stay and solace. Our fears may be offered to Him, remembering that He gathereth His children as a hen her young ones under her wings, and then who shall make us afraid ? We shall do what we can to avoid the danger we fear, saying, "I am Thine, oh, save me !" then come what may, it will be well. Thrice-blessed alchemy, by which we reduce every passion, affection, and desire to the pure gold of Heavenly Love !

St Francis de Sales.

WEDNESDAY

BLESS me, O God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Thou only true God. I thank Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour for Thy Preservation of me, and for all other Benefits. I now commend myself, both Soul and Body, and all that Thou hast set me to do in my Employment or Calling, into Thy Protection. Be Thou the Beginning of my Conceptions, my Undertakings, and all my Doings. Work Thou so in me, that I may begin all Things to the Glory of Thy Name, and accomplish them in Thy Love for the Good and Service of my Neighbour. Send Thy holy Angel along with me, to turn the Temptations of the Devil and corrupt Nature away from me. Preserve me from the Malice of cruel Men, make all my Enemies reconcileable to me, and bring my Mind into Thy Vineyard, that I may labour in my Office and Employment, and behave as Thy obedient Servant therein. Bless me and all that I am to go about and do this Day, with the Blessing of Thy Love and Mercy. Continue Thy Grace and Love in Jesus Christ upon me, and give me a Mind cheerfully to follow Thy Leadings, and execute Thine Appointment. Let Thy Holy Spirit guide me in my Beginning, and my Progress, on to my last End, and be the Willing, Working and Accomplishing of all in me.

Jacob Behmen.

THURSDAY

THE soul cannot be perfect unless borne on these two wings, humility and charity. Humility is won through the knowledge of itself, into which it enters in the time of darkness ; and charity is won by seeing that I, through love, have kept its will holy and good.

St Catherine of Siena.

SPEND not an hour so as to weep another,
 For tears are not thine own ; If thou giv'st
 words,
 Dash not with them thy friend, nor Heav'n ; O
 smother
 A viperous thought ; some Syllables are Swords.
 Unbitted tongues are in their penance double ;
 They shame their owners, and their hearers trouble.

Henry Vaughan.

GIVE thine heart, do not keep it to thy self.
 Would'st thou be trusted with thine own heart ?
 Would'st thou be left to thine own deceitful Spirit ?
 Lay up thine heart in the hand of a Saviour. Leave
 it there as a sacred deposit. Canst thou lay up thy
 Jewel in a safer Cabinet ? Let Him keep thine
 heart by His mighty power through faith unto
 salvation.

Culverwel.

FRIDAY

WE understand by the Way, that advance to perfection which is made stage by stage, and in regular order, through the works of righteousness and the "illumination of knowledge"; ever longing after what is before, and reaching forth unto those things which remain, until we shall have reached the blessed end, the knowledge of God, which the Lord through Himself bestows on them that have trusted in Him.

St Basil.

THERE are some who are not content with the myrrh that God gives them, but think fit to give themselves some. These take hold of all things by the wrong end; and they gain little grace for all their pain, because they are building upon stones of their own laying. According to them, God must wait their leisure, and let them do their part first, else no good will come of the work. In the kingdom of heaven, God will crown nothing to all eternity but His works, not thine. What he hath not wrought in thee, He takes no account of.

Tauler.

SATURDAY

YOU have passed your life in thinking that you belonged always wholly to others, and never to yourself. Nothing so greatly flatters self-love as this witness which one bears internally, to oneself, of being never actuated by self-love, but always by generosity to one's neighbour. But all this delicacy of feeling which appears to be for others, is at bottom for yourself. You love yourself to the pitch of desiring always to feel pleased at not loving yourself. All your delicacy only amounts to a fear of not being sufficiently satisfied with yourself. But it is *self* which makes you so tender and so sensitive. You wish that God, as well as men, may be pleased with you, and that you may be always pleased with yourself in all that you do with regard to God. Thus, you have reduced everything to a certain state of feeling, resembling that which is caused by the indulgence of one's passions, or by theatrical performances. *Fénelon.*

Twentieth Sunday after Trinity

FREE-WILL, which we so much contend for, and brag so much of, is no absolute perfection, and we need not be so proud of it. For free-will, as it includes a power to do wrong, as well as right, is not to be found in God Himself: and therefore it is no perfection in us.

Whichcote.

OUR free-will can hinder or stop the course of inspiration, and when the favouring breeze of grace fills our sails we can refuse our consent; but when our ship rides the waves prosperously, it is not we that raise the favouring breeze, or give the impulse, but merely that we receive Heaven's prospering gale, consent to its action, and let ourselves advance without resistance. It is God's inspiration which brings to bear that happy influence upon our free-will by which it both perceives the beauty of holiness, and is kindled, encouraged and stimulated, so as to turn with pleasure to that which is good. *St Francis de Sales.*

FOR what is freedom, but the unfettered use
Of all the powers which God for us had given?
But chiefly this, Him first, Him last, to view
Through meaner powers and secondary things
Effulgent, as through clouds that veil His blaze.

S. T. Coleridge.

MONDAY

THERE are some people who say, when they hear of high things : "That is not my way of thinking ; I had better not try to put it into practice, for I should not keep it, and then I should be just where I was before." And thus they turn away from the truth, just as if it in no wise concerned them, and sit down quite contented with their own ways, while yet they know in the bottom of their hearts that their ways are not the best that might be. This is an infallible token that these persons will never reach the highest point of which they are capable, unless indeed they come to go through a painful and agonising struggle after it. *Tauler.*

TO go along that road, aye, and to reach the goal, is all one with the will to go ; but it must be a strong and single will, not a broken-winged wish fluttering hither and thither, rising with one pinion, struggling and falling with the other. *St Augustine.*

TUESDAY

GOD utterly abhors sin, yet in His Wisdom He suffers it in order to leave perfect free-will to His creatures, so that they who are able to offend, by not offending may incur His greater favour. Be it ours to accept and bless the freedom He thus gives us ; but forasmuch as while suffering sin He abhors it, let us strive earnestly to abhor it too, earnestly intreating that it be not committed, and using all available means to hinder its birth, progress, or triumph, even as our Dear Lord never ceases to teach, threaten, promise, forbid, and command us in order to deter us from sin, without depriving us of free-will.

St Francis de Sales.

WHOSO harbours proper [self] will, and holds him at home, he must be damned as traitor in the dreadful day of doom of God. As by example ye may see in the law of the land : As if a man wilfully receive the king's felon, or maintains his traitor in his own kingdom, he is traitor or felon, and by the law he shall be damned. On the same manner the law of God damns proper will : for it was His bane and cause of His death. Proper will desired Him, accused Him, judged Him, condemned Him, and led Him to death.

Richard Rolle.

WEDNESDAY

MEN have always the more freedom, the nearer divine things they set their thoughts ; and have the less freedom, the closer they apply their mind to desire to worldly honours. They have no freedom when of their own will they bow themselves to vice ; for as soon as they turn their minds from God they become blinded with folly. *Boethius.*

NOW because man has abused the faculty elevating the understanding above his own love of himself, he has destroyed in himself that which might be the receptacle and habitation of the Lord, by making the will the habitation of the love of himself and the world, and the understanding the habitation of confirmations of these loves. The reason why man could thus destroy the will and the understanding in himself is that the love of self and the love of the world are by creation heavenly, for they are the loves of the natural man, serviceable to spiritual loves as foundations are serviceable to houses. But, when there is no love of serving the Lord and serving the neighbour, and only a love of serving himself at the expense of the world, then that love turns from heavenly to hellish, for it causes a man to sink his mind and his character in his proprium which is the love of self. *Swedenborg.*

THURSDAY

DESIRING us to obey His signified Will, God intreats, exhorts, inspires, urges, pleads with us ; but when He suffers us to resist, He merely leaves us to exercise our free-will, contrary to His desire and intention. Verily, His desire is most earnest ; for what can be a warmer expression of it than our Lord's parable of the king who made a great supper, and not only invited and pressed, but constrained his guests to come and eat ? What more could the master of the feast do, save force the food down their throats ? and such favours are offered with affection, pleading, and remonstrance, not with violence. So with God's signified Will. He heartily desires us to do what He ordains, and He supplies us with whatever is needful to that end, urging us to make use thereof ; what more could we ask ? But even as the sun's rays are not extinguished because they are rejected and shut out, so God's signified Will does not cease to be His true Will even when it is resisted and fails to produce the result it would do with co-operation. Hearty conformity with God's Will consists in willing whatsoever He has signified to be His intention, believing His doctrines, trusting in His promises, fearing His displeasure, and loving and living according to His commands and warnings.

St Francis de Sales.

FRIDAY

I HAVE seen many penitents who have been neither patient nor obedient, because they have studied to kill their bodies, but not their wills. Their consolations and desires centre in carrying their penance to suit themselves, and not to suit another one else. Therein they nourish their will. When they can fulfil their penance, they have consolation and gladness, and seem to themselves full of God, as if they had accomplished every thing; and they do not perceive that they fall into a mere personal estimate, and into a judicial attitude. For if people do not walk in the same way, they seem to them in a state of damnation, an imperfect state. They indiscreetly want to measure all bodies by one same measure, by that with which they measure themselves. And if one wants to withdraw them from this, either to break their will, or from the necessity of theirs, they hold their will harder than a diamond; living in such wise, that at the time of test by a temptation or injury, they find themselves free from indulgence in this wrong will, weaker than straw.

St Catherine of Siena.

SATURDAY

THE will assumes the character of that love to which it is wedded,—carnal if it be carnal, spiritual if it be spiritual ; and all the affections which issue thence,—desire, joy, hope, fear, sadness, take their shape likewise from that source. The will is acted upon by the affections, among which love is foremost, and it shapes all that follow. . . . So when the will has chosen the object of its affection, it becomes subject thereto ; but it can cast aside its attachment whensoever it pleases, by means of the understanding and of a firm resolution ; *e.g.*, when a man desires that the Love of God should reign supreme in his heart, he can cast out self-love, or if not wholly cast it out, at least he can so crush it that, while yet lingering, it has no power ; and on the other hand, he may forsake the higher Divine Love and cleave to creatures, therein committing that spiritual adultery of which the Heavenly Bridegroom so often accuses sinners.

St Francis de Sales.

Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity

IT is indeed My eternal economy that a man which is not regulated should be a severe torment and heavy burden to itself. My friends have been in distress, but they have peace of heart. The friends of the world hunt after bodily comfort and ease, but in their hearts, their souls and minds, they get nothing but trouble and vexation. *Susan*

THUS saw I that God is our very Peace, and He is our sure Keeper when we are ourselves in unpeace, and He continually worketh to bring us into endless peace. And thus when we, by the working of mercy and grace, be made meek and mild, we are fully safe : suddenly is the soul oneed of God when it is truly peaced in itself : for in Him we find no wrath. And thus I saw when we are in peace and in love, we find no contrariness, nor any manner of letting through that contrariness which is now in us ; nay, our Lord of His Goodness maketh it to us full profitable. For that contrariness is cause of our tribulations and all our woe, and our Lord Jesus taketh them and sendeth them up to Heaven, and there are they made more sweet and delectable than heart may think or tongue may tell. And when we come thither we shall find them ready, turned into very fair and endless worships.

Thus is God our steadfast Ground : and He shall be our full bliss and make us unchangeable, as He is when we are there. *Lady Julian of Norwich*

MONDAY

THE true peace of this life should be in the sight of our imperfections, not flattered and tolerated, but on the contrary condemned through and through. We bear in peace the humiliation of our wretchedness, because we no longer cling to ourselves by self-love.

Fénelon.

ENDEAVOUR to walk in the way of the Lord in peaceful humility. Unrest, anxiety and fear, by feeling all your miseries, will not help you ; these spring from natural weakness, and from a want of full surrender to God. The truly humble are not restless nor anxious ; they see themselves just as they are, they even rejoice in their miseries, so that God alone may be all in all. Unite yourself with the blessed will of God in all circumstances. In so doing you will find all that formerly was lacking ; so long as we want things otherwise than as God wills for the time being, so long do we disturb ourselves in vain. At every moment, our inmost will must be able to say to God : Lord, I desire nothing but Thyself and Thy good pleasure : it is good that Thou art Who Thou art, and that I also am as I am, my sins excepted. This practice is specially useful at the time of prayer.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

BUT the Stoics were not so happy in their notions about the way to true rest and composedness of spirit. It is not (by their leave) the soul's collecting and gathering up itself within the circumference of its own essence, nor is it a rigid restraining and keeping within the confines of its own natural endowments, which is able to confer upon it that composedness of mind which they so much idolize, the supreme and only bliss of man, and render free from all kind of perturbation : for by what we find in Seneca and others, it appears, that the Stoics seeking an autarchy within themselves, and being loath to be beholden to God for their happiness, but that each of them might be as God, self-sufficient and happy in the enjoyment of himself, endeavoured by their sour doctrine and a rigid discipline over their souls, their severities against passions, and against those restless motions in the soul after some high good, to attain a completely untroubled spirit, and full contentment within themselves. But herein the true method of finding rest to themselves escaped them, it being the union of the soul with God, the uniform, simple, and unbounded good, which is the sole original of all true inward peace. *John Smith.*

WEDNESDAY

SOME persons asked, one day, a man greatly advanced in grace : “Should we not do well to separate ourselves from men, to live alone, to haunt only a desert or a church ? Is not this the means to attain peace ?” The man replied : “No. And this is why. If you are righteous, you will be so every where, and towards every man. If unrighteous, you will be so equally, under all circumstances. The righteous man is he who truly possesses God : this man, wherever and among whomsoever he may live, walks in the depths of spiritual solitude.”

Ruysbroek.

THE way of inward peace is in all things to be conform to the pleasure and disposition of the Divine Will. Such as would have all things succeed and come to pass according to their own fancy, are not come to know this way. And therefore lead a harsh and bitter life, always restless and out of humour, without treading in the way of peace, which consists in a total conformity to the will of God. This Conformity is the sweet yoke that introduces us into the regions of internal peace and serenity. Hence we may know that the rebellion of our will is the chief occasion of our disquiet ; and that because we will not submit to the sweet yoke of the Divine Will, we suffer so many straits and perturbations.

Molinos.

THURSDAY

A QUIET Silent Person may possess
 All that is Great or High in Blessedness.
 The Inward Work is the Supreme : for all
 The other were occasioned by the fall.
 A man that seemeth idle to the view
 Of others, may the Greatest Business do.

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A vast and infinite capacity
 Did make my bosom like the Deity,
 In whose mysterious and celestial Mind
 All Ages and all Worlds together shin'd ;
 Who tho' He nothing said did always reign,
 And in Himself Eternity contain.
 The World was more in me, than I in it,
 The King of Glory in my soul did sit.
 And to Himself in me He always gave
 All that He takes delight to see me have.
 For so my Spirit was an Endless Sphere,
 Like God Himself, and Heaven and Earth was there.

Traherne.

FRIDAY

WHEN the Passion and Death of Christ are really in a man, also His Resurrection is really in him : if one is real, such also is the other, if the one be only notional, so also is the other.

Matthew Weyer.

THE soul perfected by humility says : "My Lord, behold Thy handmaid : be it done unto me according to Thy word, and not according to what I want with my senses." So it sheds the fragrance of patience around the Creator and its fellow-creature and itself. It has grace and quiet in its mind, and it has found peace in warfare, because it has driven far from it its self-will founded in pride, and has conceived divine grace in the soul. And it bears in its mind's breast Christ crucified, and rejoices in the Wounds of Christ crucified, and its bed is the Cross of Christ crucified. There it annuls its own will, and becomes humble and obedient.

For there is no obedience without humility, nor humility without charity. This is shewn by the Word, for in obedience to His Father and in humility, He ran to the shameful death of the Cross, nailing and binding Him with the nails and bands of charity, and enduring insuch patience that no cry of complaint was heard from Him. For nails were not enough to hold God-and-Man nailed and fastened on the Cross had Love not held Him there.

St Catherine of Siena.

SATURDAY

IN the season of dryness, spiritual people undergo great affliction, but they that shall see themselves in such a sort must take comfort, and persevere patiently, and, not giving way to grief, confide in God, who doth not forsake those who seek Him with an upright and simple heart, nor shall fail to give them all things necessary for the journey, until He leads them forth into the clear and pure light of love which He will give them by means of the dark night of the spirit, if it be so, that they deserve that He should place them therein. . . . For, if they will only have patience and persevere in prayer, and leave the soul free and unfettered, unruffled by any manner of impression or thought, free from all anxiety as to what they shall think upon and meditate, being satisfied with a loving and restful waiting upon God, devoid of all solicitude, activity, and excessive longing to feel and trust Him, they shall, indeed, accomplish a great matter.

St John of the Cross.

Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity

STRENGTHEN Thou my soul and prepare it, O

Good of all good ; and, my Jesus, then ordain
Thou the means whereby I may do something for
Thee, so that there may be not even one who can
bear to receive so much, and make no payment in
return. Cost what it may, O Lord, let me not come
before Thee with hands so empty, seeing that the
reward of every one will be according to his works.
Behold my life, behold my good name and my will ;
I have given them all to Thee ; I am Thine : dispose
of me according to Thy will. I see well enough, O
Lord, how little I can do ; but now, having drawn
near to Thee,—having ascended to this watch-tower,
from which the truth may be seen,—and while Thou
departest not from me, I can do all things ; but if
Thou departest from me, were it but for a moment, I
shall go thither where I was once.

St Teresa.

A LIFE of piety without a life of charity is of no
avail. Charity toward the neighbour consists
in doing what is good, just and right in every act,
and it extends itself to the minutest things which a
man thinks, wills and does. No one is admitted into
heaven by thinking only, but by the union of
thought and will in well-doing.

Swedenborg.

MONDAY

THE perfection of the soul consists not in speaking, nor in thinking much on God, but in loving Him sufficiently. This love is attained to by means of perfect resignation and internal silence ; all consists in works. The love of God has but few words. Thus St John the Evangelist confirms and inculcates it : *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* Thou art clearly convinced now that perfect love consists not in tender ejaculations, nor yet in the internal acts wherein thou tellest God that thou lovest Him more than thyself. It may be that at that time thou seekest more thyself, and the love of thyself, than the true love of God, *because love consists in works, and not in fair discourses.*

Molinos.

THREE things be needful to every man of what state he be, to increase his meed, through God's grace helping him. The first is that man be in honest work, without wasting his time. The second, that he do his work with a freedom of spirit, in the place and time that fall to every work. The third, that his entire bearing, whereso he comes, be so honest and fair, that loving be to God and stirring of good in all that see him.

Richard Rolle.

TUESDAY

THIS desire is root of all thy working : for know thou well, what good deed it be that thou dost for God, bodily or ghostly, it is an using of this desire ; and therefore when thou dost a good deed, or prayest or thinkest on God, think not in thine heart doubting whether thou desirest or not, for thy deed sheweth thy desire.

Richard Rolle.

HE who would never be at rest, but is still intent upon the destruction of his will, God doth not leave that man without proficiency and advancement. A fairer similitude there is not, than that of the grain of wheat, which groweth not forth out of the earth, unless it first be corrupted and die. What was contrary to nature, that did I. And if I had not done it, I had not been thus advanced by the Lord. The most desirable advancement that excelleth all others, consisteth in prayer, if together therewith any one will bid farewell to lust, and will renounce wicked cogitations. To a beginner, all defects are laid open out of the Scriptures, and then he falls diligently to his prayers.

Matthew Weyer.

WEDNESDAY

IF we turn our back on His Majesty, and go away sad, like the young man in the Gospel, when He tells us what we are to do in order to arrive at perfection, what do we wish His Majesty to do, who will give a reward in proportion to the love we bear Him? This love must not be built on our own fancy, but *proved by works*; yet do not think He stands in need of our works; He only wants a resolute will.

St Teresa.

OUR feeble works, like the grain of mustard seed, cannot be compared with the tree of glory they produce, a result given to them through the agency of the Holy Spirit, Who, entering our heart, appropriates all we do, grafting us into the Heavenly Tree to which He supplies sap and life. And by means of our co-operation He suffers us to share in the merit and profit thereof, while we attribute to Him all the glory first and last. Truly it is a wondrous bargain, by which we give Him the frail glory of our praise, and that He gives us eternal glory and joy! So it is that by our light temporal affliction we attain the everlasting joys of eternity.

St Francis de Sales,

THURSDAY

THROUGH the straight way of His commandments He leads men to good actions, and again because He safely shuts in all who through faith in Him betake themselves for shelter to the blessing of the higher wisdom, He is a Door.

St Basil.

WHEN I see souls so very careful about being attentive at their prayers, so that it seems they dare not so much as stir or divert their thoughts, lest they should lose the little pleasure and devotion they feel in their prayer, I then clearly discover how little they understand the way by which they may arrive at union, because they suppose all the business consists in this. No! our Lord desires *works*. If then you see a sister sick, whom you can in any way relieve, never fear you will lose your devotion if you sympathise with her: if she be in pain, grieve with her, and if necessary, fast, that so she may have something to eat: not so much for *her* sake, as because our Lord wishes it. This is true union with His will,

St Teresa,

FRIDAY

A MAN must be touched with pity towards his neighbours, as the Lord took pity on him : for the Mercy of God is stretched out over all His works. He who is an elect one knows with how much Longsuffering and Mercy the Lord hath borne with him, and with how much ado He hedged up his way : And his returning back into Egypt, and how, as it were, forced and compelled him, and consequently with a certain kind of violence (as I may say) he was brought unto God. Nor is he ignorant of such means applied to him by the Lord, and therefore he also never inveigheth with sharpness against others, nor judgeth sinners, but is gentle and merciful towards them. If this is to be done towards the viler and harder sort of sinners, whom no repentance toucheth, much more gently will he act with his weak neighbour, who being in the state of repentance, seeketh the Lord. This person surely he deservedly beareth with in all his defects and infirmities, and sustaineth him, even as the Lord sustained him, when he endured much about his conversion. He who will not bear, deserves not to be borne with : And he who will always shew himself unmerciful, and judge and reject others, he ought, in like manner, to expect from God Indignation, Judgment, and Rejection.

Matthew Weyer.

SATURDAY

LET us love the man, but hate his sins, and cut them away as we are best able.

Boethius.

HE that bears charitably with the faults of his neighbour, and gives them a favourable construction, shall readily obtain mercy from Jesus.

Thomas à Kempis.

GOD'S nature is to give to us, and it is of His very Being that He should give to us when we are humble. If we are not, we receive nothing from him, but do Him violence, and slay Him.

Eckhart.

MEEKNESS and piety are the way back to Thee, and Thou dost cleanse us from our evil habits, forgiving the sins that are confessed, hearing the sighs of the prisoner, breaking the chains that we forged for ourselves—if only we lift no more against Thee the horns of a fancied liberty, risking our all on the chance of more, loving our own good more than Thee, the Good of all.

St Augustine.

Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity

DESIRE we of our Lord God to dread Him reverently, to love Him meekly, to trust in Him mightily ; for when we dread Him reverently and love Him meekly our trust is never in vain. For the more that we trust, and the more mightily, the more we please and worship our Lord that we trust in. And if we fail in this reverent dread and meek love (as God forbid we should !) our trust shall soon be misruled for the time. And therefore it needeth as much to pray our lord of grace that we may have this reverent dread and meek love, of His gift, in heart and in work. For without this, no man may please God.

Lady Julian of Norwich.

O LEAD me, where I may be free
 In truth and Spirit to serve Thee !
 Where undisturbed I may converse
 With Thy great Self ; and there rehearse
 Thy gifts with thanks ; and from Thy store,
 Who art all blessings, beg much more.
 Give me the wisdom of the Bee,
 And her unwearied industrie !
 That from the wild gourds of these days,
 I may extract health, and Thy praise,
 Who canst turn darkness into light,
 And in my weakness shew Thy might.

Henry Vaughan.

MONDAY

LET this therefore be our rule through our whole life, that we endeavour to lay aside that which is a stop and hindrance to our hearts in the way of the Lord, which yet is nought else but our own selves, who do oppose ourselves to the Lord, so that we come before Him praying with half a heart only : whenas, if our hearts did spread themselves before the Lord, and could abide in a continual progress of perfect resignation, we should then find with an admirable success the power of the Lord in conquering sin.

Matthew Weyer.

OUR weakness often comes from our being too far from God, and too near the creature, and on this account God's Person and Character exercise only half their power on our hearts ; and on the other hand, our false sympathy with corrupted nature makes us unable to resist its demands. But our gracious Saviour ever beckons us to Himself with the greatest patience and lovingkindness, and wills that we turn to Him. Inwardly, must the dimmest, weakest, most hidden ray, trace, or impression of God's good pleasure, be infinitely more potent in your mind than the most obvious and powerful workings of reason and sense. Outwardly, take everything, your sins excepted, from the hand of God's Providence, however it may come and go ; let everything serve you through the practice of faith and love ; God will care for you right royally.

Tersteegen.

TUESDAY

THOU shalt firmly hope that thou art ordained by our Lord to be saved, as one of His chosen by His mercy, and stir not from this hope, whatsoever thou hearest or seest ; or what temptation befalls thee. Though thou think thyself so great a wretch that thou art worthy to sink into hell, for that thou dost no good, nor servest God as thou shouldest, yet hold thee in this truth, and in this hope, and ask mercy, and all shall be well with thee. And though all the devils in hell appeared in bodily shapes, saying to thee sleeping or waking, that thou shouldest not be saved ; or all men living on earth, or all the Angels in Heaven should say the same, yet believe them not, nor be stirred much from thy hope of salvation.

Walter Hilton.

WHEN a man entereth into earnest repentance, and comprehendeth in himself an earnest will to enter into the mercy of God in himself, and casteth away from himself all false or wicked willing, then the grain becometh sown, out of which the noble blossom in the Holy Trinity groweth : understand, the soul's will becometh therewith turned out of the Dark world into the Light world.

Jacob Behmen.

WEDNESDAY

MAY your heart be kept in the peace of absolute renunciation, which is a peace without limit and unchangeable : but not in that peace which depends on supports sought out and realised.

Fénelon.

WHAT is it but want of lodging God in the soul, and that in His stead, the world is in the midst of men's hearts, that makes them shake like leaves of trees at every blast of danger? What a shame is it, seeing natural men, by the strength of nature and help of moral precepts, have attained such undaunted resolution and courage against outward changes, yet they that would pass for Christians are so soft and fainting, and so sensible of the smallest alterations. The truth is, that either we make no provision of faith for times of trial, or if any we have, we neither know the worth nor the use of it, but lay it by, as a dead, unprofitable thing when we should most use and exercise it. Notwithstanding all our frequenting of God's house, and our plausible profession, is it not too true, that the most of us either do not at all furnish ourselves with these spiritual arms, that are so needful in the militant life of a Christian, or we learn not how to handle them, and are not in readiness for service.

Archbp. Leighton.

THURSDAY

AND when we give our intent to love and meekness, by the working of mercy and grace we are made all fair and clean. As mighty and as wise as God is to save men, so willing He is. For Christ Himself is the ground of all the laws of Christians, and He taught us to do good against ill : here may we see that He is Himself this Charity, and doeth to us as He teacheth us to do. For He willeth that we be like Him in wholeness of endless love to ourself and to our even-Christians : no more that His love is broken to us for our sin, no more willeth He that our love be broken to ourself and to our even-Christians : but that we endlessly hate the sin and endlessly love the soul, as God loveth it. There shall we hate sin like as God hateth it, and love the soul as God loveth it. And this word that He said is an endless comfort : *I keep thee securely.*

Lady Julian of Norwich.

THE Cock crow'd once, and Peter's careless ear
 Could hear it, but his eye not spend a tear :
 The Cock crow'd twice, Peter began to creep
 To the Fire-side, but Peter could not weep :
 The Cock crow'd thrice, our Saviour turn'd about
 And look'd on Peter ; now his tears burst out.
 'Twas not the Cock, it was our Saviour's Eye,
 Till He shall give us tears, we cannot cry.

Quarles.

FRIDAY

WHOSOEVER would come to know the work of God through His mercy, they must begin this knowledge with sincerity of mind, which seeks nothing else but God alone, *whosoever proceedeth with a double heart is an abomination to the Lord*. Now doubleness of heart consists in this, when we are not with our whole heart, soul, and thoughts given up, and wholly left to the Lord; also when we put up our prayers before Him with a divided heart, divided in two, whence also it is, that we are not heard according to our desires. For the Lord loveth us more than we ourselves do love ourselves, inasmuch as He is averse to our destruction, and always freely bestoweth on us that which is most useful and most profitable for our happiness, which indeed is that which at first is unknown to us, but is at length made known to us, though by and through great afflictions; because that we were so far fallen into our desires, and into that evil which we call our Propriety, that we must first be subjected to great anguishes and griefs before we can become submitted to the will and obedience of God, which is that which can never be done without a spiritual death, and the mortifying of all our own powers, even as they sensibly feel, who are chosen, and led by God into such a death.

Matthew Weyer.

SATURDAY

WHAT is necessary to you, is solitude of heart and spirit. If you have it not, then, were you alone in the world, you would not be solitary. If you have it, then, were you jostled in every crowd in creation, you are in solitude.

Ruysbroek.

A MAN must enter into himself, and seek and call upon the Holy Spirit *in* himself; for in himself is the place where God dwelleth in His heaven, and taketh in the soul's will with its desire. Whither will the soul long cast itself, it is itself the fountain of the eternity; in itself standeth the principle to the Light and Dark world; *it* is all the three worlds. The whole matter is about this: that as it hath in Adam with the imagination, introduced itself into the earthly world, which standeth essentially, innately in the Dark world, wherein then the omnipotence and ability is become broken and shut up in death, so now it should be in the Spirit of Christ, which hath broke open the death in it, turn into the Light in the omnipotency again; it must go into God's house *in itself*.

Jacob Behmen.

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity

MAN'S understanding is able to be raised into wisdom, but not his will, excepting in so far as he shuns evils as sins.

Swedenborg.

WHEN a Man's own Will dieth from itself, then it is free from Sin, for it desireth nothing but that which God desireth of His Creature ; it desireth only to do that for which God hath created it ; and that which God will do by it ; and though it is and must be the Doing, yet it is but the Instrument of the Doing, by which God doth what He will. For this is the true Faith in Man, viz : to die from himself ; that is, from his own Desire ; and in all his Undertakings and Designs to bring his Desire into the Will of God, and arrogate the doing of nothing to himself, but esteem himself in all his doings to be but a Servant or Minister of God, and to think that all he doth and undertaketh, is for God. For in such a disposition the Spirit of God leadeth him into true Uprightness and Faithfulness towards his Neighbour. For he thinketh thus with himself : *I do my Work not for myself, but for God, Who hath called and appointed me to do it : I am but a Servant in His Vineyard.* He listeneth continually after the Voice of his Master, Who within him commandeth him what he shall do. The Lord speaketh in him, and biddeth him do what He would have to be done by him.

Jacob Behmen.

MONDAY

THOSE who are consecrated have given their own wills into the keeping of God's will. Such a soul is resigned in all things, whether for soul or body, whether for time or eternity ; by leaving what is past in oblivion ; by leaving what is to come to God's Providence ; and by devoting to God, without any reserve, *the present moment.* *Mme. Guyon.*

HOW few of us arrive at real union with the will of God, though he who is careful not to offend God, and has entered into religion, imagines he has done everything ! O ! how many worms remain undiscovered, until, like that which consumed the plant of Jonah, they have devoured our virtues by self-love, self-esteem, rashly judging our neighbour though in small things ; by want of charity towards them ; for although we satisfy the obligation of not committing sin, yet we are far from doing what is required of us, in order to be *wholly* united with the will of God. *St Teresa.*

TUESDAY

BE sure that our free-will is never so free as when it becomes the slave of Christ, never so enslaved as when it is the minister of self. Its true life is death to self, its living death is self-seeking.

St Francis de Sales.

SHOULD a man hear a voice from Heaven, or see a vision from the Almighty, to testify unto him the love of God towards him ; yet methinks it were more desirable to find a revelation of all from within, arising up from the bottom and centre of a man's own soul, in the real and internal impressions of a godlike nature upon his own spirit ; and thus to find the foundation and beginning of heaven and happiness within himself : it were more desirable to see the crucifying of our own will, the mortifying of the mere animal life, and to see a divine life rising up in the room of it, as a sure pledge and inchoation of immortality and happiness, the very essence of which consists in a perfect conformity and cheerful compliance of all the powers of our souls with the will of God.

John Smith.

WEDNESDAY

THY sacred Will be done, great God,
 To spend, or to suspend Thy Rod :
 If possible, my will's to miss it ;
 If otherwise, to stoop and kiss it. *Quarles.*

IN matters of weight we need to be humble, and mistrustful of self, not thinking 'to discover God's Will by our own cleverness or quickness of perception. After seeking light from the Holy Spirit, and diligently employing our own faculties to know God's Will, and after consulting others, if need be, it is best to decide on our course as in God's Sight, and then not to look back, nor admit doubts as to our decision, but to persevere steadily, quietly, and trustfully. Even if difficulties and temptations which are common to all beginnings, should lead us to question the wisdom of our choice, it is best to be firm, and not dwell upon the doubt, but to bear in mind that had we decided differently, we might have been still worse off ; not to say that it may be God's Will to try us by consolation or tribulation, by peace or by war. Once having taken a resolution on right grounds, never look back ; if the principle was right, so will the work be, and any other course is merely an indication of self-will or folly.

St Francis de Sales.

THURSDAY

THE teaching of the Lord Jesus of the cross and self-denial is strong meat for corrupt nature, so that however heartily we lay hold of it in the beginning, it becomes too strenuous and bitter as it goes on, unless it is softened and sweetened by the practice of constant prayer. But by this I do not mean so much the asking, imploring and entreating of the soul to receive this or that from God ; but rather such an occupying of our spirit and belief with God and godly precepts, and specially with that that is called in the Scriptures, a turning to God, and into His Presence.

Tersteegen.

THERE is a wide difference between being occupied with God Who satisfies us, and trifling with the satisfaction He bestows. The soul then, to which God gives a holy, loving quietude in prayer, should abstain, as far as may be, from inspecting self or that rest, which is in danger of being lost by overmuch contemplation, and the true way of prizing it is not to pay too much heed to it. If we find that curiosity to know what progress we make in prayer has disturbed us, the safest course is to turn back quietly to God's Presence, and seek to rest therein once more.

St Francis de Sales.

FRIDAY

ABOVE all, if you desire to make any progress in charity, keep your heart just. In all the works you shall do, purify first your intention, never seek in them your interest, your honour, or your content : But only the good pleasure and will of God. Be careful in all that you undertake, whether of yourself or by the orders of another, never to do any thing, either because decency requires it, or to satisfy the ceremonies of the world, or because necessity obliges you, or force constrains you to it, or to please the eyes of men, or for any other human interest ; but purely to please God, and content Him.

St Luis of Granada.

WHAT do I require of thee more, than that thou study to resign thyself entirely unto Me ? Whatsoever thou givest besides thyself I heed not, for I seek not thy gift but thee. As it would not suffice thee to have all but Me, so whatsoever thou givest cannot please Me if thou offer not thyself. Offer up thyself unto Me, and give thyself wholly for God, and thy offering shall be acceptable. *Thomas à Kempis.*

SATURDAY

TO this God you likewise ought to swear such an oath as the soldiers do to Cæsar. For do they, in order to receive their pay, swear to prefer before all things the safety of Cæsar, and will not you swear, who have received so many and so great favours, or if you have sworn, will you not stand to it? And what must you swear? Never to disobey, nor accuse, nor murmur at any of the things appointed by him, nor unwillingly to do or suffer anything necessary.

Epictetus.

LOVING and suffering are become one. Loving, He suffered, and suffering, He loved. So also we ourselves. Love gives birth to and sweetens suffering; and suffering tries and purifies love. Jesus was never without love, and never without suffering in His life here on earth; and loved and suffered even unto death. Neither of these must be wanting in us. Would we love, then must we suffer; our love cannot and will not be without suffering till we reach heaven: and there, after the fire of suffering has melted away all the dross of sin and self-ness, this fire will cease, and nothing but love remain to all eternity. May Jesus help you to love and suffer, then will all else follow of itself.

Tersteegen.

Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity

WE repeat every day in the Lord's Prayer : Lord, Thy will be done. When however His will is fulfilled, we are angry, and will not give ourselves up to it. Whatever He does, must seem best to us, and must please us best. They who know it to be best always remain in perfect peace. But you often say : If only something else had happened, it would have been better ; or if it had not happened just like this, perhaps it might have been better. So long as you think this, you will never win peace. You must know it for the best that could be. *Eckhart.*

NO other way there is, but for the will to be born again, that thereby it may recover its virgin might and force. This birth is not according to the will of man, but God. Who out and from an infinite pity and love, is come by Water, Blood, and Spirit to recover and lift up your relapsed wills. Oh now then, as beloved of your God, for ever drink in this word of counsel, and herein join and work with the Spirit of your Lord Jesus, Who is come to persuade and allure you [so to do]. For your superior will, will hereby be so free, chaste, pure and mighty, as may outspread into a wonderful fruitfulness, more terrible than whatever hath been displayed to the check and rebuke of all, and the best of those mortals that yet are come no further than to a lame and divided property of will, who nothing of might can do.

Jane Lead.

MONDAY

WE do more for others by correcting ourselves, than by endeavouring to correct them. Let all things flow past, like water beneath a bridge. Remain in the hiding-place of God, Who never flows past us. *Fénelon.*

HEREIN the soul beholds the fountain of life, the principle of being, the cause of good, and the root of soul. . . For we are not cut off from this fountain, nor are we separated from it, though the nature of body intervening, draws us to itself. But we are animated and preserved by an infusion from thence, or rather, we are what we are by verging to it. Our well-being also consists in this tendency. And to be distant from it is nothing else than a diminution of existence. Here, likewise, the soul rests, and becomes out of the reach of evils, running back to that place which is free from ill. And here also, she energizes intellectually, is liberated from perturbations, and lives in reality. For the present life, and which is without God, is a vestige of life, and an imitation of that which is real.

Plotinus.

TUESDAY

THE grace of justification delivers us from all the miseries of sin. For God, who is an infinite abyss of mercy, thinks it not enough to pardon our sins, and receive us into His favour, unless He free our souls from all those disorders which sin had raised in it, by reforming and renewing the inward man. So that He heals our wounds, He loosens our chains, He eases us of the burthen of our evil desires, He frees us from the slavery and captivity of the devil, He restores us to a true liberty, He beautifies the soul anew, He settles peace and joy in our conscience again, He makes us forward to do what is good, and backward to do that which is evil, He strengthens us against temptations, in fine, He repairs our inward man with all its faculties after such a manner, that the apostle does not hesitate to call those who are thus justified, *New men and new creatures*. So great is the grace of this renovation, that when we receive it by baptism, it is called a regeneration ; when by penance, a resurrection ; not only because the soul, by virtue of it, is raised from the death of sin and the life of grace ; but because it holds some proportion with the glory of the general resurrection at the last day.

St Luis of Granada.

WEDNESDAY

LEARN now that the end of every creature is that which thou hast thyself named, even God. To Him all creatures are wending ; they have no good to seek beyond this, nor can they find anything higher or outside Him.

Boethius.

WE do not belong to Him consciously enough ; our heart is too roaming, too divided, and too much filled with things that hinder His influence and sweet companionship : it is indeed good and necessary that we should, by God's grace, practise ourselves in self denial, and secret prayer ; only God must do the principal part of this, yes, finally He only works in us through the manifestations of His Providence, and the leadings of His grace ; for He knows what to give and what to take, in order to help us. Our duty in this is to call every simple thing good that He does ; to let fall our own will, and what seems good to us ; for He knows how best to prepare us, to gather us up, to bend us, to simplify us, to strengthen us in wonderful ways, in order that He may work unhindered in our hearts, and dwell in them everlastingly. So let us then love and thank Him in everything, and also believe, even when we cannot see, that He, the dear Friend of our souls, and our Saviour is close to us in our hearts. Only a little while does He leave us, shorn of all earthly comfort, before He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.

Tersteegen.

THURSDAY

LET no man think it will come to pass that men will come who will teach or compel the Holy Spirit with authority or power into men. No, it is said : "Today, when you hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your ears and hearts." Expect not another time, for *this* is the time of your visitation. Incline your ears and hearts into the Temple of Christ *in* you, cast your admiration, and false or wicked will from you, and bring your will earnestly, through Christ, into the Father ; and purpose no more to enter into the evil or wickedness, *viz.* : into pride, covetousness, envy, anger and falsehood : leave off the high loftiness of this world, and humble yourselves in the hands of the Lord, and in love towards the needy. Esteem yourselves meanly and simply in Christ ; esteem your art for nothing, for it doth but lead you from Christ ; desire to know nothing else but that which the Holy Spirit in Christ will know in you, that It alone may be your knowing and willing. For by no searching from, or out of reason, will the Fountain in Sion be found ; not from without or externally, will Sion first be generated or born, but from within inwardly ; we must seek and find ourselves in ourselves : none need run about for another place, where he supposeth the Spirit to be more powerful, but in himself is the gate of the Holy Deity.

Jacob Behmen.

FRIDAY

ABOVE all, you cannot vanquish all evil, and distractions, yea even the whole world, by force, and anxiety ; but rather by peaceful bearing, and despising, by forgetting, and by shutting your eyes to them. There is One in us, who fights for us, turn your eyes lovingly on Him. *Tersteegen.*

HERE Faith comes to be tried, whether it be of man, or whether it be of God : for if it be of man, it refuseth to choose for itself true poverty of spirit, together with the abnegation of proper happiness, which it elected for itself ; for it denieth to assume for its conservation and happiness, anything but what is before its own eyes, and is promised in words grossly understood from the Scriptures, and acquiesces in the doing of them only that the soul may be saved ; but if some things seem to it to be impossible to be performed, it lays all that upon the shoulders of Christ, as without and beyond itself ; and so quiets its own conscience in the best manner it can be possibly performed. When as if from the most inward secrets of its own soul, it would confess the truth, it would indeed tell you of a conscience not soundly pacified, but rather of one that gnaweth and tormenteth, unless it strives of set purpose to hide the true state of the matter. *Matthew Weyer.*

SATURDAY

KNOW that the Lord hath His repose nowhere but in quiet souls, and in those in which the fire of tribulation and temptation hath burnt up the dregs of passions ; and the bitter waters of affliction have washed off the filthy spots of inordinate appetites ; in a word, this Lord reposes not Himself anywhere, but where quietness reigns, and self love is banished. But thou wilt never arrive at this happy state, nor find in thy soul the precious pledge of peace internal, till it become purified from the disordered passions of concupiscence, self-esteem, desire, and thoughts of self, however spiritual, and many other interests and secret vices which lie within the very soul of thee, miserably hindering the peaceable entrance of that great Lord into it, Who would be united and transformed with thee. The very virtues acquired, and not purified, are a hindrance to this great gift of the peace of the soul ; and more, the soul is clogged by an inordinate desire of sublime gifts, by the appetite of feeling spiritual consolation, by sticking to infused and Divine graces, entertaining itself in them, and desiring more of them, to enjoy them, and finally, by a desire of being great.

Molinos.

(Take any further weeks that occur after Trinity, from the weeks after Epiphany.)

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